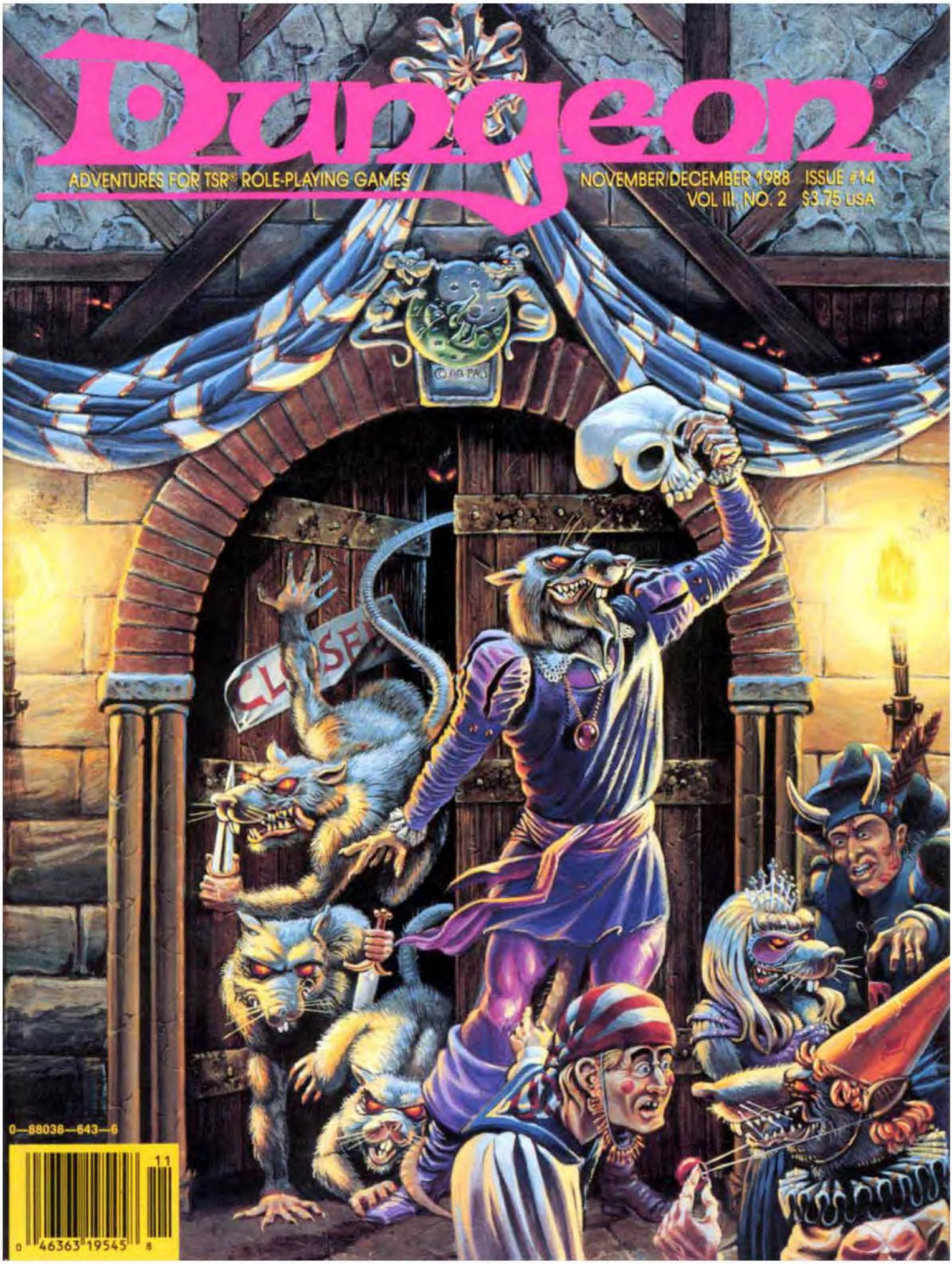
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Dungeon®

ADVENTURES FOR TSR® ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1988 ISSUE #14

COVER: Surprise! The full extent of the lycanthrope epidemic is revealed in Paul Jaquays's cover illustration for "The Wererats of Relfren."

Behind the Mask

From an obvious shapechanger like the protein polymorph in "Masqueraider" to the more subtle duplicity in "Stranded on the Baron's Island" and "A Question of Balance," things are not always what they appear to be in this issue's adventures. The rescue in "Phantasm Chasm" becomes an ambush, the foes in "Master of Puppets" are animated by "the man behind the curtain," and the inhabitants of Relfren are wererats. We didn't plan it this way, and it may never happen again, but it seems an appropriate theme for the season.

Thanks to Grant Boucher for this issue's quote. It was originally part of the introduction to "The Wererats of Relfren," but we felt it was perfect for the entire contents. While we haven't used up all our quotes from readers, we could use more. There's a nice bribe for anyone whose quote we use.

With this issue, Lori Svikel changes hats from production assistant to art director. She's looking forward to having more fun at the light table than she did in the darkroom. We bid farewell to Roger Raupp, who has moved to California just in time to avoid another Wisconsin winter.

If you haven't yet mailed in your survey card from issue #13, it may not be too late. The deadline is October 15, but we'll be counting them through the end of October. Look for survey results in the next issue.

Barbara G. Young

Vol. III, No. 2

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The Readers — **LETTERS** 2

Randy Maxwell — **MASQUERAIDER** (ADD 2-5) Monsters prowl the hills, but you never see more than one at a time. 4

Nigel D. Findley — **A QUESTION OF BALANCE** (ADD 8-12) Two travelers mysteriously appear in a magical storm. Which one is the demon? ..14

Willie Walsh — **STRANDED ON THE BARON'S ISLAND** (ADD 4-6) You've just crashed the strangest party. None of the guests are quite what they seem to be. 19

Carl Sargent — **MASTER OF PUPPETS** (ADD 6-8) He's a murderer and a renegade wizard. The bodyguards he's built are just as bad. 35

Erik Kjerland — **PHANTASM CHASM** (ADD 5-7) The orcs you're tracking have done an awful lot of damage for mere orcs. 44

Grant Boucher & William K. Wenz — **THE WERERATS OF RELFREN** (DD 3-6) This little mountain town will soon become known for more than its famous cheese. Will you become part of the solution, or part of the problem?..... 48

"There is many a monster who wears the form of a man; it is the better of the two to have the heart of a man and the form of a monster."

Beauty and the Beast, Marie LePrince de Beaumont

LETTERS

Let Someone Else Do the Work

I am writing to say that I do not agree with what Matthew N. Eames and Ryan Fox had to say in issue #13. They felt that the solo adventures (issues #9 and 12) were not worth publishing. For some of us, those solo modules are a godsend.

I am the DM of a good-sized group, eight people, and I do not get to take my own characters through an adventure often. The occasional solo adventure lets me relax and let someone else do all the work. Having too many solo adventures would not be a good idea, but one every third issue or so would be a nice change.

I would like to also thank all the writers who worked late into the night to produce those remarkable modules found in DUNGEON® Adventures. I have tried from time to time to write a module and know how hard it is.

Bradley C. Achorn
Troy, Michigan

Rewriting to Fit

I never thought I'd see the day when I would run a dungeon without first spending hours rewriting for a tailored fit into my campaign. Well, that day came to be when I read Willie Walsh's "Huddle Farm." Reaction of the six players was split three ways: liked it, it was ok, and hated it. Those who did not like it said they missed the warm, loving comfort of solving problems with a weapon.

As a DM of a long-running campaign, I find the best way to keep the game interesting is to have the adventures lead into one another, much like chapters in a book. Unfortunately, this means spending a lot of time altering dungeons to fit the campaign. I once did this with modules, but soon realized I was changing them so much, often keeping only the map, that at $8.00 a shot it was far from cost-efficient. I then began writing my own dungeons. That worked fine, except I'm a junior in mechanical engineering and could not spend enough time writing to play as often as the players wanted.

Then came DUNGEON Adventures and the answer to my dreams. I use DUNGEON Adventures like a library, searching through old issues to find an adventure which most closely meets my needs, thus allowing me to play more often as less time is spent reworking the plots.

As to the argument of longer versus shorter dungeons, I usually alter the shorter dungeons and use two or three of them as a lead-in to a larger dungeon. This is incredibly effective.

Lastly, solo adventures are difficult to turn into playable adventures, but I do if the story is outstanding.

Jim Chapman
Ville Platte, Louisiana

Planar Adventures

I have enjoyed DUNGEON Adventures since my first issue. With five or more exciting, well-written adventures in every $3.75 issue, I can finally afford to get a lot of AD&D® modules without going broke. I do not like solo adventures; however, one for every few issues is a compromise that I can handle.

I do have one problem. I plan on starting an outer planes campaign with the help of the *Manual of the Planes* and OP1 *Tales of the Outer Planes.* DUNGEON Adventures, however, is still my main source of adventures. But in your guidelines it is written that DUNGEON Adventures does not accept outer planes adventures. Will you please repeal this rule to allow some to be published, or at least let me know why you don't allow such adventures.

Regardless of whether or not you decide to print outer-planes adventures, you have still helped out my campaign with adventures such as "Threshold of Evil" and "The Ruins of Nol-Daer" which can lead to the outer planes. Does TSR have any other planes material that I have not mentioned?

Scott Davis
Los Alamos, New Mexico

You must have an old copy of our guidelines. We didn't want to accept planar adventures before the Manual of the Planes *was published, as that book was to be the authority on the subject. Now that it's available, feel free to use that material as a basis for planar adventures submitted to DUNGEON Adventures. (In fact, we mentioned this in the letters column of issue 9.) The two products you mentioned, with* Legends & Lore, *GDQ1-7* Queen of the Spiders, *and the later H-series Bloodstone modules, are the only TSR AD&D game materials currently in print on the planes.*

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Oh, You Noticed!

I would like to know if you planned the two RPG magazines put out by TSR to be named "Dungeon" and "Dragon." How many other people have noticed the titles? I really like DUNGEON® Adventures, but could you publish less solo modules? I don't mind D&D® modules, but solo adventures seem useless. Thanks.

Roger Hill
No Address Given

Since we already had DRAGON® Magazine, DUNGEON Adventures seemed an appropriate title for our second magazine. It just seemed to ring a bell.

Adventure Showcase

Congratulations go to Patricia Elrod for "Going Once. . .Going Twice" (issue #13). This is precisely the type of scenario which I feel DUNGEON Adventures should encourage its readers to play and create. While game companies can't risk the publishing of commercial modules without melodramatic conflicts, DUNGEON Adventures can and should become a forum that showcases the less juvenile side of the fantasy role-playing arena.

Ms. Elrod's scenario was by far the easiest of any I have seen in these pages to integrate into an ongoing campaign. My only wish is that the adventure had been more "personal." Something as simple as naming one of the retired wizard's visiting associates and listing which items at the auction he had his eye on — thus creating individual competition and permitting higher stakes in the final bidding — would have added an extra touch to the scenario.

One question, though. The scenario is populated by a few zero level halflings. Perhaps I have misremembered, but I seem to recall that there are no zero-level demi-humans in the AD&D game.

On a different subject, I was horrified to read that pro-solo outnumbered anti-solo by two to one. I must stress the fact that solo adventures are **not** D&D or AD&D modules, no matter how much vocabulary they have in common, and therefore should not take up valuable pages. At the least, I implore you not to increase the frequency of solo adventures.

Christopher Earley
Binghamton, New York

Curiously, halflings are the only demi-humans who can *be of zero level. As stated on page 74 of the* DMG *below table I.B., "Dwarves, elves and gnomes are never lower than 1st level (unlike halflings and humans, which may be of 0 level)."*

Of the readers who have so far responded to the survey card in issue #13, 42% state they enjoy solo adventures. Compare this to only 23% who want Oriental adventures (which we run fairly often) and 34% who want D&D modules (which we try to run each issue). We don't intend to either drastically increase the frequency of solo adventures or decrease the number of D&D game or AD&D Oriental modules we run, but we are getting an interesting picture of our readers' preferences that does not fit all our assumptions.

What It's All About

I have always thought that the object of gaming was to have fun, and your magazine is providing people with a means to do that very nicely. But when I read letters from people trying to take someone's fun away, I ask myself why.

I'm sick of reading letters from people who are trying to get everything in your magazine their way. I don't mind someone voicing an opinion, but people who whine that they're putting good money into your magazine and aren't getting enough out of it just don't seem to be the type of people who should be playing a role-playing game.

If a gamer can give up a space or two for a module of his type each issue, that space can then go for other types of modules (solo, comic, short, 1st-level, etc.) and the people who play these other types would be able to have some fun. That's what it's all about, isn't it?

Scott D. Borror
Olathe, Kansas

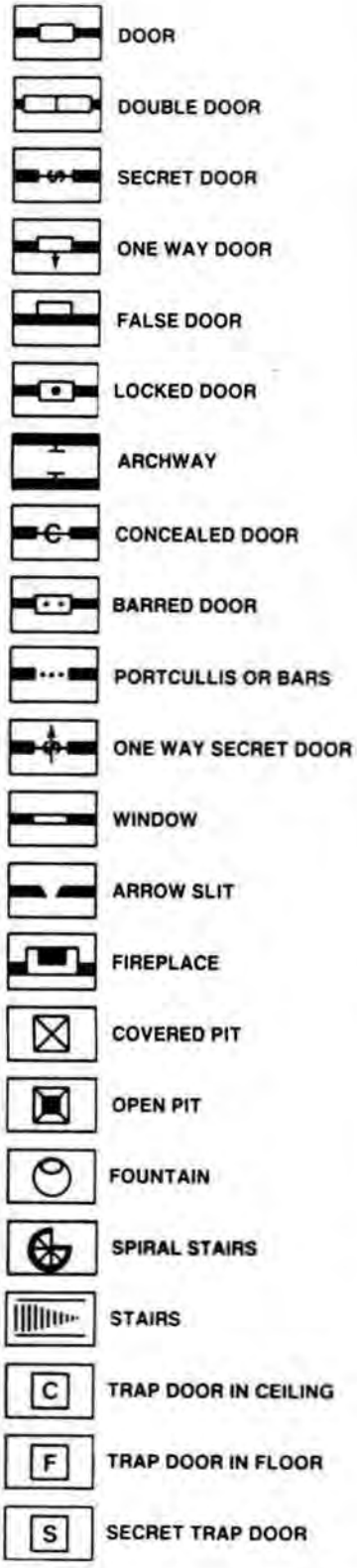
"Whipping Up" a Good Debate

I would like to respond to Jennifer Martire's letter in issue #12. She states that anyone can "whip up" a (good) low-level adventure, and I must disagree. The choice of appropriate monsters is extremely limited, as is the treasure. The designer needs to be particularly creative to keep the adventure from becoming a boring, generic one. First-

(continued on page 43)

MAP SYMBOLS

These symbols are used on most maps in DUNGEON™ Adventures.



MASQUERAIDER

BY RANDY MAXWELL

The hunter becomes the hunted.

Artwork by Tom Baxa

The author says "I have never seen a protein polymorph, but I certainly know how one feels. In the last two years I quit smoking and gained 80 lbs. In the past few months I have been lifting weights. So, like the polymorph, I have changed shapes several times." This is Randy's third appearance in DUNGEON® Adventures.

"Masqueraider" is an AD&D® game adventure for 4-6 characters of 2nd to 5th level. The adventuring party should be composed of varied classes, but no particular class is essential for successfully completing the adventure.

This adventure takes place in the country of Cormyr, in the FORGOTTEN REALMS™ setting. Cormyr has many rules and regulations concerning mages, freeswords, and adventuring parties. The DM and players should familiarize themselves with the information on Cormyr in the *Cyclopedia of the Realms*, pages 32-35. While this information is not essential to running the module, it will add a great deal of texture, detail, and depth that the DM and the players will enjoy. The DM can, of course, set this adventure in any farming area east of a mountain chain in his own campaign world.

Adventure Background

The adventurers are in either the town of Tyrluk or one of the nearby villages (Eveningstar, Espar, Waymoot, etc.) when they hear a crier make the following pronouncements, mixed with many a "Hear Ye! Hear Ye!" and "O good citizens!":

— "Anyone knowing the whereabouts of a thief named Dullwon should contact Hezom, Lord of Espar. Factual information shall be rewarded with 50 silver pieces."

— "The Lonesome Tankard Inn of Eveningstar will, in three days time, hold a feast and celebration in honor of the birthday of Tessaril Winter, Lord of Eveningstar. Come one, come all!"

— "Suldag, Lord of Tyrluk, is offering adventurous persons or parties rich bounty and reward for the death, destruction, or capture of the beast or beasts disturbing the tranquility of Tyrluk. Those interested and unafraid should contact the sergeant of the Tyrluk watch for details."

— "The Cup and Spoon Inn of Waymoot is offering good wages and work-

ing conditions for experienced cooks and scullery help."

— "Anyone with debt or claim against the estate of Hist Gree, merchant of Dhedluk, lately deceased, make such information known to Thiombur, Lord of Dhedluk."

— "Carpenters, masons, and limners! Laborers, smiths, and teamsters! Help keep Cormyr safe whilst earning good wages. Patriotic work is to be found at Castle Crag."

The DM may include other announcements for the crier, typically locations of public celebrations; rewards and bounties for criminals; and notices of births, marriages, and deaths. The crier knows nothing more about these announcements; he is simply a professional crier, paid to loudly call out messages in the streets of the city.

Crier: AC 10; MV 12"; zero-level human; hp 3; #AT 1 (unarmed); Dmg by weapon type; AL N.

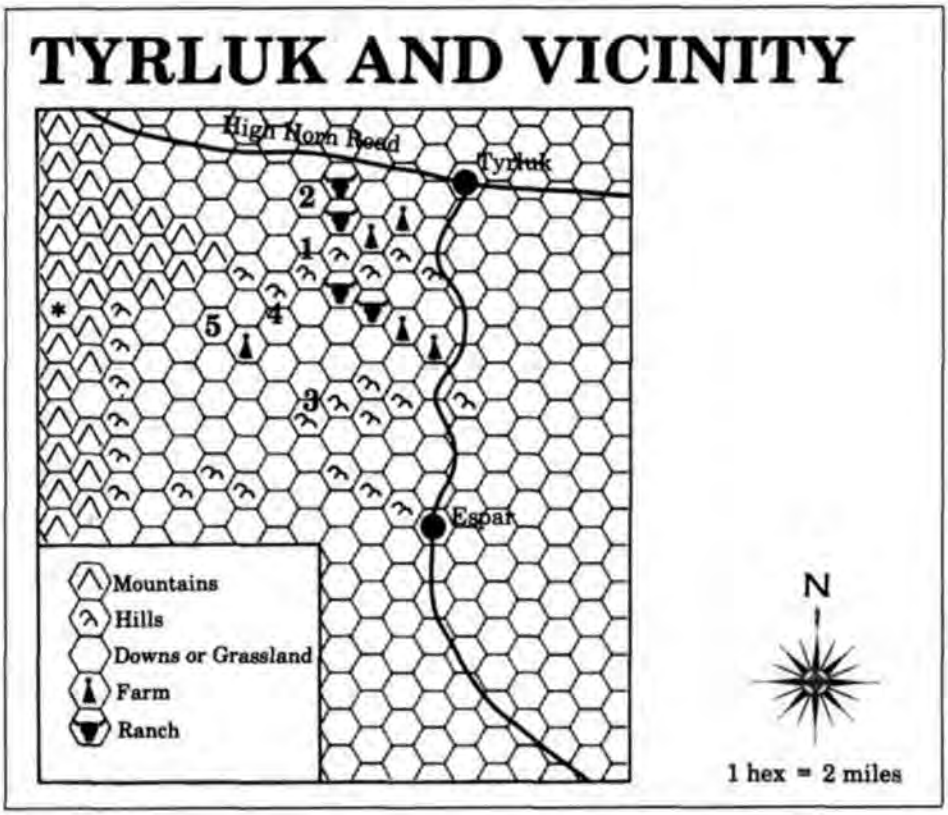
Even inexperienced players should realize that the bounty offer from Tyrluk is the best hope of adventure. If, however, they check out the other announcements, the PCs find that Dullwon has already been located, none of them have any claim against the estate of the late Mr. Gree (and the local authorities know it), and only back-breaking labor for a small monthly wage will be found at Castle Crag and the Cup and Spoon Inn. PCs attending the celebration in Eveningstar will have a good time but accomplish little.

For the Dungeon Master

Information on Tyrluk can be found on page 86 of the *Cyclopedia of the Realms*. The adventurers can find any supplies, armor, or weapons listed in the *Players Handbook* at normal prices. Of course, for better swords, the PCs will want to go to Espar.

The PCs can find the sergeant of the Tyrluk watch by asking any of the townspeople. They direct the party to the King Azoun, a quiet beer garden located near the center of town.

Sergeant Josh Jykyr: AC 10; MV 12"; F1; hp 9; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 12, I 14, W 11, D 14, C 13, Ch 14, Co 11; AL NG. The sergeant is unarmored and carries a quarterstaff. He has arms and armor at home, but for normal duty in town, he doesn't even carry a shield or a dagger.



Josh Jykyr is a middle-aged man, shrewd, astute, and perhaps a bit too fond of ale. When the PCs ask about the bounty and the beast, the amount of information they get depends on the amount of ale they buy him. Each piece of information costs a tankard of ale. Josh does not deliberately conceal or hide information, but he always tries to wheedle a tankard of ale for it. Before answering questions or giving information, the sergeant says such things as, "The answer to that depends on who's buying the next round," "I'd tell you, but my throat's so dry I can barely speak," or else he stares blankly at his empty tankard while rattling it loudly against the table. If Josh does not know the information the PCs want, he says so and answers another question without complaint. Josh also draws the PCs a map of the local area (the DM should trace a copy of the Tyrluk and Vicinity map, omitting the encounter numbers.

Between swallows of ale, the sergeant tells this story:

"So you want to know about the bounty? Well now, it's been nigh on two months that something's been bothering the ponies. And there's been other attacks on people and farm animals of all sorts, but most of the damage has been done to the pony herds. Well, Lord Suldag has put up 1,200 gp, the local horse and pony breeders have put up another 4,000 gp and 10 choice ponies, and if that ain't enough to whet your appetite, the farmers and merchants have declared they'll match the lord's bounty with 1,200 gp of their own. Now, that's a tidy sum of money for killing some animal, though mind you, none's collected that bounty yet and many have tried.

"Most of the ponies simply vanished. We thought at first it was bandits stealing them. Then a pony was found that had got away from whatever attacked it. Clawed up it was, covered with bites and scratches. Others were found with marks on them, marks made by who

knows what. One of the herd guards disappeared, and a wagonload of cabbages was found abandoned between here and Espar, both the horse and driver gone. The farmers southwest of here are complaining that something deadly's abroad. There's chickens, shoats, and a milk cow or two missing. There's even a couple of farm lads turned up missing, though with such lads you're never sure if they're missing or if they just don't want to be found. One thing's for sure. Something's hunting fresh meat between the High Horn Road and the Espar Road.

"That's all I know about it. There's hunters gathered at the Crossroads Inn as can tell you what they seen. Remember when you're out hunting, don't go near the herd guards. They're jittery and liable to loose arrows at anything. Watch out for other hunting parties, too. Bounty money attracts attention; you're not the first to come. There's at least one other group out now, calls themselves the Knaves of Clubs. They're from Arabel; that's all I know about them.

"One last warning, now. If you get into trouble, you get yourselves out of it. Don't come crying to me. The watch is for guarding Tyrluk, not rescuing the careless."

This is all the information Josh has to offer. If the PCs press him on any particular point, the sergeant only repeats what he has already said. He advises the PCs to visit the inns and taverns in town to pick up further information.

If the PCs visit the Crossroads Inn, they find a small congregation of hunters and adventurers (for the DM to role-play as needed). If the PCs buy a few rounds, ask a few questions, and listen carefully to conversations and arguments, they learn the following information:

— A couple of good fighters from Waymoot swore they were attacked by an owlbear just a couple of miles south of Tyrluk. One had the claw marks to prove it. The other's horse had a bite on the shoulder to show what a near thing it was.

— Soldiers traveling from High Horn to Arabel said they'd seen a giant scorpion about 10 miles west of Tyrluk. It was as big as a house and heading for the pony herds. They chased it, but it gave them the slip.

— Even Lord Suldag went hunting for the creature but couldn't track it down.

— From the tracks, it must be either an owlbear or a big brown bear that has come down from the mountains.

— Some say it's a huge bug of some kind, a giant scorpion or a giant spider.

— It must be a creature from another plane of existence.

— The tracks all seem to lead toward where the old folks say there's a haunted valley.

— The Knaves of Clubs are an adventuring company operating out of Arabel. Three of the Knaves came through about 10 days ago. They have been out hunting the creature ever since.

If the PCs wish to talk to someone who has been actively hunting the creature, they are directed to the local inn where they can find Jubal Dhancing.

Jubal Dhancing: AC 7; MV 12″; F2; hp 12; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 15, I 10, W 12, D 9, C 12, Ch 9, Co 9; AL CN; leather armor, shield, long bow, short sword, hand axe. Jubal is a professional bounty hunter. He tells the PCs all he knows for 50 gp. Jubal is heading home to Suzail and wants to leave Tyrluk with at least enough money to cover his expenses. He cannot be hired as a tracker as he has a sure 6,000-gp job waiting for him in Suzail (exactly what the job entails, he won't say). The PCs will have to better that offer for Jubal to stay around. Jubal tells the following story:

"I went on several hunting trips looking for this thing. On most of them I saw absolutely nothing. Twice, though, I caught sight of something. The first time, there was something big and bulky moving through the underbrush. It was gone by the time I got close enough to see clearly. Might've been an owlbear or a brown bear; might've been one of them lost milk cows the farmers are going on about.

"The second time, I saw a giant spider, plain as plain can be, but it got away. No one's seen it since then or found its web or trail. If a giant spider's been doing its hunting round here, the poor flies it catches are the only ones as know for sure.

"Anyway, I saw the spider and the big bulky thing on an old abandoned farm southwest of here. What troubles me most is, both times the thing just seemed to vanish. I followed the tracks, then all of a sudden there weren't no more tracks. It may be there's truth in what the old folks say about something from a haunted valley doing all the mischief.

"So I did some tracking out in the hills near the mountains, out where the old codgers say there's a haunted valley. Tracking can be well nigh impossible out there, and I didn't find much. Here and there, you run into an odd track or two. All I know about it is, somewhere in all them valleys and canyons is one that's supposed to be haunted — by what, if anything, the old guys can't seem to remember. Those as goes in don't come out. That's what the old folks say. You can ask, just like I did, but no one alive remembers just exactly where that valley is."

If the PCs interview any of the elderly residents of Tyrluk, they have no more luck than Jubal about locating the haunted valley or finding out exactly what haunts it. Many of the old folks confuse the valley with the Haunted Halls north of Eveningstar and tell the PCs exactly how to find that place. If the PCs insist on going there, they find it is sealed off by soldiers from High Horn on a training exercise.

If the PCs ask the other hunters to show on their map the locations of sightings or encounters, the DM may mark the map anywhere. Jubal marks the map near the old farm southeast of area 5, to coincide with his story.

The Culprit

The creature troubling the pony herds of Tyrluk is a protein polymorph. This particular protein polymorph is a variation on the one described in the FIEND FOLIO® tome, page 73. The creature's natural form has been included in the Protein Polymorph Table at the end of this module. More detailed information on the creature is given here.

The protein polymorph can assume any form it chooses and attacks as the creature it is imitating, using the natural weaponry of a beast or monster (teeth, claws, stingers, etc.). This is why the number of attacks entry shown in the FIEND FOLIO tome is variable; in polymorphed form, the monster has the

same number of attacks as the creature being imitated, and attacks inflict normal damage. For example, a protein polymorph in the shape of an owlbear has three attacks for 1-6/1-6/2-12 just as a normal owlbear. However, the hit dice for the creature being imitated are ignored, and "to hit" rolls are made (in this case) for a 6-HD monster.

In its natural form, the polymorph has one attack: enfold and crush for 6-36 hp damage per round. Armor class and movement rate change as the creature polymorphs, but its hit dice and hit points remain the same. For example, when the polymorph changes from owlbear to giant scorpion, its armor class is raised from 5 to 3, and its movement rate changes from 12" to 15". It is very important to remember that the protein polymorph cannot imitate a creature's special abilities. In the form of a spider or scorpion, it can sting and bite for damage but cannot inject poison or create webs, as it cannot duplicate the organs required to do so. Saving throws vs. poison should be rolled to avoid prematurely alerting the party to the nature of the creature. As the PCs consistently make their saving throws, regardless of the number rolled, suspicions will be aroused soon enough.

To determine the polymorph's form at any given time, use the Protein Polymorph Table at the end of the module. The DM may either roll randomly or choose the form that best suits the situation. Random rolls should always be ignored if there is a better choice for the creature to make. The polymorph always uses its forms and form-changing ability to its best advantage.

The protein polymorph is an intelligent creature. If it is aware it is being hunted, whether in the wilderness or in its lair, it attempts to conceal itself by polymorphing to look like its surroundings: trees, rocks, cavern walls, etc. The PCs have a 10% chance to detect the imposture from a distance of 10'; touching the polymorph instantly reveals its animate nature. The polymorph attempts to avoid outright confrontation with any hunting party, preferring to lay low and pick off stragglers. The monster openly attacks the party only if concealment is no longer effective, or if the party is sufficiently weakened to be easy prey. Its methods of attack include, but are not limited to:

— Polymorphing into the shape of a pony and then ambling up to an unsuspecting herd guard or real pony.

— Polymorphing into the shape of a hunting creature (owlbear, giant spider, etc.), and killing a victim in that form.

— Polymorphing into the shape of a luscious patch of grass or a shady tree. Ponies attempting to eat the grass or herd guards taking advantage of the shade are attacked and devoured.

This particular polymorph does not use the gear or weapons of its victims, so it will not attempt to polymorph into human, demi-human, or other weapon-wielding forms.

The Hunt

The PCs may hire trackers in Tyrluk. Roll 1d6 for the level of each NPC hired as a tracker. A roll of 1-3 yields a 1st-level tracker, 4-5 is a 2nd-level tracker, and 6 brings a 3rd-level tracker. The maximum level of any NPC with tracking proficiency (see *Wilderness Survival Guide,* page 17) hired by the PCs is 3rd level. Any trackers hired are of the fighter class, but no ranger NPCs are available. The cost of hiring a tracker is one full share of the bounty; 100 gp per level of the tracker per day; and all food, gear, and transportation. The tracker will track only. Fighting, carrying supplies, guard duty, and decision making are left strictly to the PCs. Every tracker demands a deposit be left with city officials to ensure the adventuring party won't tire of the hunt and leave the tracker alone and unpaid somewhere in the wilderness.

PCs hunting southwest of Tyrluk find many small farmsteads and pony ranches. The largest of these are marked on the map of Tyrluk and vicinity, and perhaps on the players' map if they have asked the right questions. The PCs may spend the night in relative safety in barns and stables. The farmers and ranchers will not charge a hunting party for such lodging. Indeed, the locals are more than happy to help anyone hunting the creature. PCs asking about other hunting parties are told that the Knaves of Clubs passed through but have not returned.

The farms consist mainly of house, barn, chicken coop, and on larger farms, a small barracks-type building for the hired hands. The farms have large vegetable gardens, but their main crops are oats, hay, and other types of fodder for the ponies. The crop fields are fenced, and the fences are well tended to keep the ponies out.

Ranches consist of a house for the owner and his family, large stables for wintering the ponies, and a bunkhouse for the ranch hands. Each ranch has a fenced vegetable garden, but pastures, meadows, and glades are left unfenced so the ponies may graze freely.

The terrain southwest of Tyrluk consists of rolling, grass-covered downs that occasionally give way to high, rocky hills. The hills tumble down into deep valleys filled with trees and bushes that hinder but do not completely block passage. Many of the valleys have small streams running through them. Nearer the mountains, the land becomes much rockier. Unexpected ravines open suddenly before a traveler, and the land slopes sharply upward to meet the mountains. When using the Random Wilderness Encounters table at the end of this adventure, roll once per day until within 10 miles of the mountains, then begin rolling twice per day (once during the day and once at night).

Set Encounters

1. Herd Guards. Three **herd guards** (AC 9; MV 12"; zero-level humans; hp 6 each; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; AL NG) are on top of a low hill, guarding a small herd of about 25 ponies while brewing a pot of tea over a low, smokeless fire. All three are armed with long bows and daggers. The herd guards are unarmored but carry shields of wood or hide. Any herd guard the PCs question knows nothing. The watch has been quiet, and nothing unusual has happened. Unless the PCs are rude, they are invited to stay for a while and have some tea. The herd guards will not attack the PCs, not even accidentally (as Josh suggested), unless the PCs attack first. Attacking a herd guard on duty, for any reason, is a criminal offense in Cormyr. If the PCs adopt such an uncouth course of action, they will be declared outlaws and a bounty will be placed on their heads.

2. Snakes.

> As you are crossing a large, pleasant meadow, the sun gleams off something shiny to your left. As you approach, you see that it is a brass cowbell.

If the PCs investigate, they hear a soft rustling in the grass behind them. This sound marks the passage of two **poisonous snakes** (hp 10, 8; see Random Wilderness Encounters for complete statistics) hunting rabbits in the meadow. The snakes do not attack the PCs unless the PCs attack first. If approached, the snakes stand their ground, hissing and writhing menacingly in an attempt to drive the party away from their hunting ground. If one snake is killed, the other attempts to flee. The cowbell is worth 1 cp to any farmer, but it is impossible to identify its owner.

3. Tick Nursery.

> You are traveling through a wooded valley between two hills. The woods are thick enough to occasionally hinder movement, and as you enter a small clearing you see an old tree stump directly ahead blocking the path you wish to take. As you approach the stump, a faint rustling noise begins. When you are within 10′ of the stump, the rustling becomes loud and clear. Looking toward the stump, you see several giant ticks crawling toward you.

Months ago, a giant tick laid its eggs in a crumbling old tree stump. The eggs have recently hatched, and the hungry young ticks infest the stump and the area within 50′ around. Forty **giant ticks** (AC 3; MV 3″; HD 1; hp 5 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1-2; SA blood drain; AL N; MM1/94) are newly hatched and not yet full grown. This is the reason for the lower than normal hit dice and damage. A hit by one of these young ticks scores 1-2 hp damage and indicates the tick has attached itself, draining 1-3 hp of blood per melee round thereafter. In all other respects, treat these as normal giant ticks.

The giant ticks do not attack until the party is within 10′ of the stump, then they attack horses and beasts of burden as well as riders. The area near the stump is wooded heavily enough to slow the party to half normal movement rate. Twenty ticks arrive and attack randomly every other melee round until all 40 ticks have attacked or the party has moved out of the area. Roll 1d4 for each PC, NPC, horse, and any other warm-blooded creature in the party to determine the number of ticks attacking that individual. The ticks attack until slain.

4. The Dead Pony.

> In the pasture before you is a dead pony. Three giant bluebottle flies are hungrily picking at the carcass. As you approach, one fly leaves the pony and buzzes angrily over the heads of the entire party, then returns to feed on the carrion.

If the PCs drive off or kill the **bluebottle flies** (hp 16, 14, 11; see Random Wilderness Encounters for complete statistics), they see claw marks on the dead pony, but the type of creature that made the claw marks cannot be determined. It is obvious from the trail of blood on the ground that the pony was attacked somewhere else and ran until it collapsed on this spot. The PCs may easily backtrack along the trail left by the pony as it was bleeding badly, and in its pain and panic, it crashed through bushes and undergrowth leaving a visible path. Tracking modifiers (see *Unearthed Arcana*, page 21) are: the terrain is soft enough to hold impressions, there has been no precipitation for many days, and the tracks are less than 12 hours old. The trail is about three or four miles long. Anyone following it can find where the pony was originally attacked (see area 5).

5. Tracks and Bugs.

> Coming out of a small grove of trees, you see a torn and trampled patch of earth forming a rough circle about 20′ in diameter. There is blood everywhere in the circle. Normal flies and insects, attracted by the blood, swarm in a state of feeding frenzy.

The circle was made when the polymorph, in the shape of an owlbear, attacked two ponies. In rearing and kicking, the ponies tore and churned up the turf. One of the ponies was mortally injured but escaped (see area 4). The other pony was killed and carried off by the polymorph to be eaten later. Anyone entering the circle looking for clues should be treated as attacked by an *insect plague* spell, sustaining 1 hp damage per melee round.

There are no clues to be found within the circle, but if the PCs study the area around the circle, they find owlbear tracks leading away almost due west. Tracking modifiers are the same as for the pony trail leading to this spot (see area 4). However, there is no trail of blood or smashed undergrowth.

The polymorph, in the shape of an owlbear, headed due west, toward its lair in the haunted valley. When the party is within one hex of the mountains, only the smallest traces of the track remain (change the terrain modifier accordingly). This change signifies the party has come out of the grassy downs and is now traveling through the watersheds and rocky ravines near the mountains.

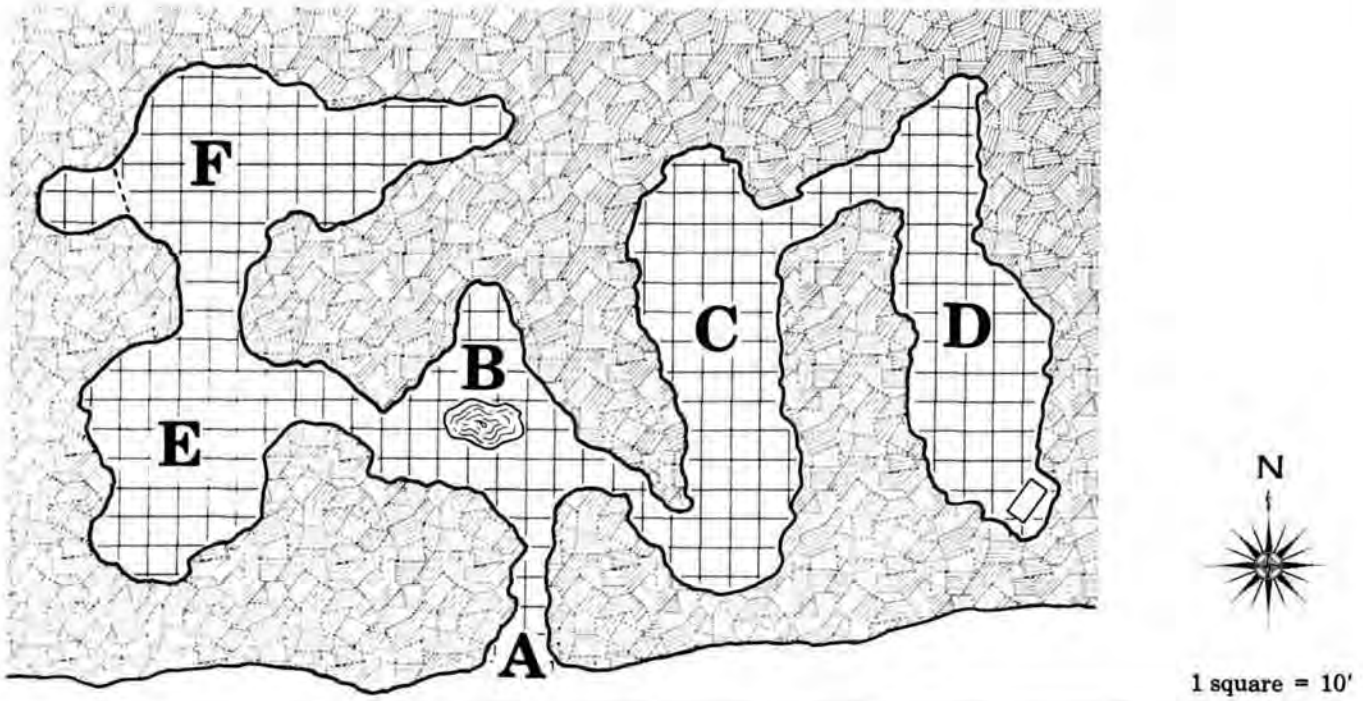
6. More Tracks (optional). The DM may use this encounter if the adventuring party is unable to track the creature to its lair. He need only describe an owlbear's tracks crossing a meadow, the claw prints of a bear left in the mud of a stream bank, or the faded trail of a giant scorpion crossing a high down, etc. The party can discover these tracks anywhere, miles apart and seemingly unrelated. It is very important for the DM to keep an accurate record of these directions, for they are the clues that the PCs need to discover the whereabouts of the polymorph's lair. Starting at the location where tracks are found, the PCs can draw lines in the directions the tracks are coming from and going to. The lines should intersect at the polymorph's lair. The DM may wish to place a few "ringers" — sets of tracks leading nowhere in particular — at the locations marked by Jubal and the other hunters.

The Lair

The polymorph's lair, shown by a star on the map, is a cave in one of the hundreds of valleys and ravines at the mountains' feet. Some of these valleys are pleasant places with streams and small stands of trees. Others are nothing but wildernesses of boulders and rocks, little more than dry watercourses. For movement rates, consider the area near the polymorph's valley as very rugged.

The valley where the polymorph lairs is green and pleasant, about one mile long and half a mile wide, with a shallow stream running along its north side. The valley runs east to west, with the northern wall higher than the southern.

THE POLYMORPH'S LAIR



The southern wall is a gentle slope covered with grass and scattered trees. The northern wall slants sharply upward from the valley floor, forming an almost vertical surface covered with creepers, vines, and ivy. The valley floor is fairly level, with a long, gentle slope at the eastern end and a sudden upthrust to the west. The sand and gravel valley floor is spotted everywhere with large patches of grass and weeds.

This is the rumored haunted valley. It got its reputation over a hundred years ago when hunting parties would occasionally disappear while searching for game nearby. What actually haunted the valley no one ever knew or lived to tell. As the pastureland to the east became more settled, and farming and ranching took precedence over hunting, the valley and its location were almost forgotten.

The reason for the valley's sinister reputation can be found in the protein polymorph's cave. Still there, in the silence and the solitude, as evil as ever, is a red abishai imprisoned in an opaque crystal prison. While in service to Tiamat, the abishai was not abject enough in his obeisance one day. Angered by this slight, Tiamat encased the lesser devil in crystal, opened a *gate,* and hurled the imprisoned abishai through. The *gate* opened onto the Prime Material plane, and the crystal prison landed in the cave.

So long as he remains imprisoned, the abishai is reduced greatly in ability. He still, however, retains the following powers: normal telepathic ability, *cause fear, charm person, suggestion,* and *animate dead.* He cannot use any other powers until freed from his prison, but once freed, the devil regains his full abilities immediately (see area D).

The crystal prison is magical; it will keep the encased devil alive virtually forever. The prison also acts as a scrying device, allowing the devil to see and hear all that goes on around it for 250′ in any direction. This effect is added torture from Tiamat, so the devil could see life going on around him on his plane of exile but be unable to do anything about it (or so Tiamat thought).

In the early years of his imprisonment, 140 years ago, the devil had a worshiper; a hill giant bowed down and prayed to the crystal that had suddenly landed in his cave. The devil used his telepathic abilities to order the hill giant to bring animal skeletons to be animated, and when the hill giant died, he too was animated. The abishai used the monster zombie and the animal skeletons to haunt the valley and the cave, killing all who came near. As the long years passed, fewer and fewer people came to the valley. The devil was quite happy to lament in solitude and does not gladly suffer the presence of the protein polymorph.

If the PCs follow the polymorph's trail from area 5, it leads them to the eastern entrance to the valley, across the valley floor, and to the shallow stream. The trail runs along the south side of the stream to a point about two-thirds of a mile into the valley, where it suddenly crosses the stream and disappears into the ivy-covered southern slope. The PCs need only part the ivy where the tracks enter it to discover the lair's entrance. If the PCs use the intersecting line method of discovering the valley, they should pick up the trail by the stream.

The cave has rough walls, level floors (except where noted), and 40′ ceilings except at the entrance.

A. Cave Entrance. The 20'-high entrance to the cave complex is covered with hanging ivy. The walls are irregular, narrowing from 25' at the entrance to 10', then suddenly widening out again. The walls of the tunnel glisten with moisture, and the smell of decay and death is in the air. The sharply sloping tunnel floor is slick and smooth; each PC must roll his dexterity or less on 1d20 or slip and fall for 1-2 hp damage. The noise of such a fall announces the arrival of the PCs to the occupants of the cave. This dexterity roll must be made every time the PCs use the tunnel, either going or coming, unless they cover the tunnel floor with sand and dirt from the valley. At the 60' mark, the tunnel ceases to slope downward and levels off as it enters a large cave.

B. Pool Cave. In the center of this triangular cave is a 20' × 15' pool of stagnant water covered with harmless green scum. On the northern edge of the pool lies a broken banner staff, its pennant floating half in the pool. The other half of the pole is nowhere to be seen. If the PCs examine the banner, they see that the design is obscured by green scum. Washing the banner in the stream outside removes the scum and reveals the design. The stained silk banner is embroidered with the image of a common playing card, the knave of clubs. It is worthless to anyone but the Knaves of Clubs in Arabel, who will pay 100 gp for the return of the banner and the story of how the finder came by it.

If the PCs search the pool, they find it is 3' deep with a muddy bottom. It contains a leather jerkin so rotted that it falls to pieces if lifted from the water. The jerkin, adorned with six gold buttons worth 10 gp each, is all that remains of a hunter killed over 50 years ago by the minions of the abishai. The pool also contains a potion of *invisibility* in a decorative bottle worth 25 gp. Casting certain spells on the pool also affects this potion, if it has not been removed from the pool. For example, a *purify water* spell purifies both the pool water and the potion, thus ruining its effect.

C. Muddy Secrets. The tunnel leading here from the pool cave slopes sharply downward, but the floor is rough and gritty, giving good traction. The northern end of this cave is covered with 3' of mud, and the remainder of the floor is muddy and slippery. Movement rates are reduced to half normal while in this cave. The PCs can see 10 animal skeletons scattered randomly about the cave, the bones sticking up out of the mud. Examination reveals the skeletons are those of canines — large dogs, wolves, cooshees, etc.

In the southernmost end of the cave, the PCs can find a putrefying corpse holding a dagger in its right hand. Its left hand grasps the lower half of the broken banner staff from area B. The front of the corpse's leather armor has been specially tooled and dyed in the Knave of Clubs design. This unfortunate fellow was the banner bearer of his group. What happened to the others, no one will ever know. The dagger is a *dagger +1*, and the armor is *leather armor +1*. Due to the decayed nature of the corpse, there is a 5% chance per hour of continual contact with the armor (wearing it or carrying it) to contract a disease (use *Dungeon Masters Guide*, pages 13-14, to determine the nature of the illness). The armor can be made wearable and disease free by boiling it or by casting a *cure disease* spell, although someone must be wearing the armor for this spell to work.

The Knave of Clubs emblem tooled into the front of the armor cannot be removed without ruining the armor. This can cause certain complications for the wearer if he is not a Knave. The Knaves of Clubs believe in the rule of "finders keepers," but only as it applies to other peoples' goods. They prefer that their equipment be returned to them, even if lawfully found and claimed. The Knaves pay a 5% finder's fee to anyone returning an item carrying their emblem. Use the *DMG* gold-piece values to compute this finder's fee. If the Knaves become aware that the PCs own one of their suits of armor, they send a representative to ask for its return. If the PCs do not return the armor, they have made serious enemies in Cormyr.

The Knaves of Clubs (or as they are called in Arabel, the Club of Knaves) is made up entirely of fighters and thieves. They number around 25 and are all between 2nd and 4th level. Their leader's name is not known, but he is rumored to be a henchman of Lheskar Bhaliir, a tavern owner and fence of stolen goods (see *Cyclopedia of the Realms*, page 25, #111).

In the northeastern part of the cave is another tunnel that slopes roughly upward and has good footing. Anyone moving more than 10' into this tunnel causes the 10 visible animal skeletons in this area to animate, and another 10 animal skeletons rise out of the muck at the far northern end of the cavern. When this happens, a hill giant zombie heads for the party from cavern D, arriving in cavern C one round later.

Animal skeletons (20): (AC 8; MV 6"; HD 1−1; hp 6 (×10), 5 (×10); #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; SD immune to *charm, cold, death magic, hold,* and sleep; half normal damage from edged weapons; AL N; MM2/109). These are turned as normal skeletons at +1 in the cleric's favor, with 1d6+6 skeletons affected.

Hill giant monster zombie (AC 6; MV 9"; HD 6; hp 33; #AT 1; Dmg 4-16; SD immune to *charm, cold, death magic, hold,* and *sleep; half damage from blunt weapons;* AL N; MM2/131). This monster zombie is turned as a ghast.

The abishai has given these undead instructions to keep anyone within from leaving cavern C by the southwestern tunnel. The undead attempt to drive the party east and stop attacking any PC who enters cavern D. The undead pursue the PCs to the limit of the abishai's ability to sense them (250'), attacking until either the PCs or undead are destroyed, all the PCs are out of range, or all the PCs are in cavern D.

If the animal skeletons are destroyed and examined, the PCs can see that three of the ones that rose from the muck are wearing leather collars. These skeletons are cooshees. Each collar is studded with six small moonstones, each worth 25 gp. The collars are so muddy that they must be examined closely or removed and handled by the PCs before the stones are discovered. One collar still retains a small rusty metal tag dangling from it. If the tag is examined, the PCs see it is covered in elvish writing: "Property of the Guild of Naturalists. Please contact guild officer, Myth Drannor." The reverse side of the tag bears a rough outline of the city of Myth Drannor with a small star etched within it. This star represents the approximate location of the guild in the elven city. The DM who wishes to use the "Halls of the Beast-Tamers" module from the *DM's Sourcebook of the Realms* will find the rusty tag a convenient introduction to it and other adventures in Myth Drannor.

If the monster zombie is destroyed, the PCs who examine it find a silver chain worth 50 gp around its neck.

D. Abishai Cave. This cave is damp and stuffy. The floor is rough and level but not muddy. In a natural alcove in the southeast corner of the cave is what appears to be a large block of dark crystal, rough and irregular but vaguely coffin shaped. The 10' × 6' × 6' block weighs over one ton and is not transparent, so it is impossible to tell if anything is in the center of the block. In total darkness, the block gives off a faint red glow. Infravision and ultravision reveal nothing about the block, but detection spells reveal magic and evil (the block is magical, and its prisoner is evil). If the block is broken, the magic is destroyed.

Trapped within this block is the red abishai mentioned earlier. Once the PCs enter cavern D, the abishai can hear (but not see) them through the block without the necessity of scrying. The devil prefers telepathic communication, but he can be heard if he speaks from within his prison. When speaking, the devil sounds as if he is very far away and down a deep well, but he is quite understandable.

Because the block allows the devil to scry in a 250' radius circle, he is aware of the PCs from the time they enter the cave complex. He can only see and hear in that area, not cast spells. Spells or spell-like effects are cast normally by the devil from his prison.

PCs entering cavern D are immediately attacked with *charm person* and *suggestion* spells. The abishai uses a *cause fear* spell against anyone trying to break or remove a spell he has placed on a PC. The abishai is desperate to influence *charmed* PCs to break the crystal block and telepathically recommends several ways of doing so. The block is not valuable, though the devil may claim it is, and does not have to be completely destroyed to release the abishai, as he regains his *teleport* ability the instant the crystal ceases to completely surround him. The devil recommends the following methods for freeing him:

— Build a bonfire out of logs with the block in the center. Eventually, the heat will crack the block (but the smoke will drive the PCs from the cave).

— Drive an iron spike into the crystal. When it is driven through the crystal wall, the abishai is no longer totally surrounded by crystal and is able to *teleport* out.

— Chip the block away with hammer and chisel.

The PCs can try any of these methods or others they think of and have the equipment for.

If spells fail to work, the abishai resorts to telepathic pleading for release. He makes the most outrageous promises and lies through his teeth about himself and what he can do for the PCs. The abishai claims he is actually a good spirit trapped in this prison, under a curse to appear evil and doomed to be guarded forever by terrible undead. He promises rich rewards and powerful magical items for his release.

If neither spells nor telepathic persuasion work, the abishai tries to finish off the adventuring party with his undead minions and spells.

Red abishai: (AC 1; MV 18"/18"; HD 4+2; hp 23; #AT 2; Dmg 2-5/2-5; SA grapple for 2-5 hp, strike with tail for 1-2 hp; SD half damage from cold and gas, immune to fire, regenerates 1 hp per round (unless struck by silver, holy water, or holy magical weapon), 40% magic resistance; AL LE; MM2/45). It has the following spell-like powers usable one at a time, one per round: *animate dead, cause fear, change self, charm person, command, illusion, infravision, know alignment, produce flame,*

pyrotechnics, scare, suggestion, and *teleport without error* (at the 4th level of effect, where appropriate). Once per day, the abishai can *summon* another abishai with a 20% chance of success. The abishai attacks using two long daggers and gets a +1 hp damage bonus for strength.

Once the PCs crack or otherwise destroy the devil's prison, he *teleports* out of the block to an area within 10' of the PCs. Released from his prison, the abishai is difficult to deal with in either negotiation or melee. Roll initiative normally. The abishai has no treasure, but his daggers are valuable; they have obsidian blades with handles made from the ribs of a red dragon, and each is worth 200 gp.

E. Trash Cave. The tunnel leading to this cavern slopes upward and offers good footing. The protein polymorph uses this cave as a receptacle for all the inedible belongings of its victims. PCs searching the cavern find a great deal of rubbish and many valueless objects such as a bent scabbard, two unmatched boots (both for the left foot), torn and ruined clothing, an old bridle, an empty wallet, and other bits of unidentified trash. The following valuables can be found, one item per turn of thorough searching: three small coin purses containing assorted coins worth 32 gp, 41 gp, and 56 gp; a leather belt with a silver buckle, worth 25 gp; an empty, ornate scroll tube made of bone and ivory, worth 75 gp; two full vials of holy water; and five gems worth 200 gp, 100 gp (×2), and 50 gp (×2).

F. Protein Polymorph's Cave. This cave is damp, and a putrid smell rises from areas of old, dried blood on the floor. A dead pony is lying against the north wall of the cavern. If more than 24 hours have passed since the PCs followed the trail from encounter 5, the pony has been devoured by the polymorph, leaving only a pool of blood.

In the western portion of the cave is a small alcove completely filled by the polymorph. PCs entering the cavern see only a continuous wall. If the PCs detect the polymorph, it changes into a giant scorpion and attempts to flee the caverns. If flight is not possible, it attacks but attempts to flee at the first opportunity. The PCs must actively block the exit from the cave to keep the polymorph from escaping.

If the polymorph escapes the cavern complex, it seeks to evade pursuers long enough to change its appearance into that of its surroundings. The protein polymorph returns to the cave 2d12+24 hours after it has successfully fled. If the PCs are still in the caverns, it waits until the party runs low on supplies, then attacks anyone attempting to return to Tyrluk for provisions. The polymorph also tries to lure the PCs out of the caves by making quick sorties into the complex and then retreating. PCs falling for this tactic find the polymorph doubles back to attack anyone left at the cave, destroying their supplies and gear.

If the PCs are unable to find the polymorph in the cavern and decide to look elsewhere, leaving a lone guard, that person is attacked in 1d6+6 turns. If the PCs camp in the cave, the polymorph waits until the majority of the party is asleep, then changes into a fast-moving creature, attacks the guards, and flees. It returns later as above.

If the PCs attack the protein polymorph while it is in the process of changing from one creature to another, they do so at −1 on their "to hit" rolls due to the shape-changing ability of the polymorph. A character aiming a blow at the polymorph-owlbear's head may suddenly see the head disappear as the polymorph changes shape, avoiding the intended blow. While changing, the protein polymorph is able to move at its normal movement rate of 9". The polymorph does not enter caverns C or D except in a life-or-death situation. If killed, the polymorph's cells despecialize, and it collapses into its natural form (See Protein Polymorph Table).

Concluding The Adventure

If the PCs kill the polymorph and bring its body back to Tyrluk, the bounty is paid in full — but as 1,200 gp worth of food and supplies rather than 1,200 gp in coin!

If the PCs release the abishai, Tiamat eventually hears of it, and the PCs have an enemy in the Nine Hells. Tiamat won't bother the PCs as long as they stay on the Prime Material plane, but should they venture to other planes, her servants may be waiting. The PCs will have more immediate problems if they release the abishai but do not defeat him. The devil slowly raises an army of undead from his victims and uses this army to raid and loot the local area. PCs warning the local lords of the abishai's release are expected to stay and help fight it. The local lords offer them no reward but do not levy any penalty on the PCs for releasing the creature if they stay to help.

If the PCs have not released the abishai, they may report the crystal block and its prisoner to the local authorities. If the block is reported to Hezom, Lord of Espar, the 9th-level cleric hires the PCs at 100 gp each per day to take him to the cave holding the imprisoned devil. Hezom then tries to *exorcise* the creature from the crystal prison and kill it.

If the PCs fail to find the polymorph or abishai, they suffer no penalties. The group is simply another hunting party that tried and failed.

The PCs may sell the Guild of Naturalists' dog tag or attempt to find the guild themselves. The DM may wish to expand on the participation of the Knaves of Clubs in his campaign; they can be formidable as low-level opponents. The description of the Knaves has been deliberately left vague for such expansion.

Random Wilderness Encounters

Roll 1d12 once per day or as otherwise instructed. A roll of 1 indicates an encounter. Roll 1d8 to determine what is encountered; the DM should feel free to increase or decrease the number of creatures encountered, depending on the location of the encounter and the strength of the adventuring party.

1. 5-20 **ponies** (AC 7; MV 12"; HD 1+1; hp 5 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1-2; AL N; MM1/53). These may either be strays or part of a protected herd.
2. 10-40 **giant rats** (AC 7; MV 12"//6"; HD ½; hp 2 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1-3; SA disease; AL N(E); MM1/81). The bites of these rats have a 5% chance each of inflicting a serious disease.
3. 20-70 **wild cattle** (AC 7; MV 15"; HD 1-4; hp variable; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; SA stampede; AL N; MM1/13). The herd has a 25% chance of stampeding directly at the party. If the PCs are caught in a stampede without cover (rocks, trees, logs, a wall, etc.), roll 2d4 for each party member to determine the number of cattle trampling that PC. Trampling does 1-4 hp damage per head of cattle.

4. 1-4 **giant bluebottle flies** (AC 6; MV 9"/30"; HD 3; hp 16, 13, 12, 10; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SD jump; AL N; MM2/65). There is a 10% chance per bite that the victim is infected with some sort of disease. The defensive jump is a backward spring of 30' that takes place in one segment and allows the giant fly to be airborne 10' above ground at the end of the movement.

5. 2-20 **large spiders** (AC 8; MV 6"*15"; HD 1+1; hp 5 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA poison; AL N; MM1/90). The poison of these spiders is relatively weak (save at +2).

6. 1-6 **poisonous snakes** (AC 6; MV 15"; HD 2+1; hp 15, 12, 10 (×3), 7; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA poison; AL N; MM2/111). Saves vs. this poison are made at −2. Failure to save results in complete incapacitation for 2-12 days.

7. 2-8 **fighters** (AC 7; MV 12"; F2; hp 15, 12 (×6), 8; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; AL any G). This patrol from High Horn is on a training exercise. They all wear leather armor, carry shields, and are armed with long bows, short swords, and daggers.

8. Protein polymorph or roll again. The DM should roll 1d6 on the Protein Polymorph Table for this encounter. The PCs should encounter the polymorph only when actually in the wilderness. On farms, ranches, or within one hex of a town, roll again.

Protein Polymorph Table

When using this table, the DM is advised to ignore rolls that do not fit a given situation or if there is a better choice for the polymorph to make. The polymorph is intelligent and uses its forms to its best advantage. The protein polymorph shifts in and out of these forms at will, taking one round to do so. It assumes the armor class, movement rate, and attack mode of the imitated creature, doing damage as that creature, but the hit points and hit dice used are always the polymorph's own. Regardless of the form used, the creature attacks as a 6-HD monster.

1. Owlbear (AC 5; MV 12"; #AT 3; Dmg 1-6/1-6/2-12; SA hug; MM1/77). In this form, the polymorph is able to use the owlbear's hug as this special attack requires only the owlbear's form, which the polymorph is able to imitate. The owlbear's hug causes 2-16 hp damage.

2. Brown bear (AC 6; MV 12"; #AT 3; Dmg 1-6/1-6/1-8; SA hug; MM1/9). In this form, the polymorph is able to use the bear's special attack hug (see owlbear). The bear's hug causes 2-12 hp damage.

3. Giant scorpion (AC 3; MV 15"; #AT 3; Dmg 1-10/1-10/1-4; MM1/85). In this form, the protein polymorph can sting but cannot inject poison.

4. Giant spider (AC 4; MV 3"; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; MM1/90). In spider form, the polymorph can bite for 2-8 hp damage but is unable to inject poison or spin a web.

5. Surroundings. (See protein polymorph in natural form for statistics.) In this form, the polymorph imitates its surroundings: trees, bushes, grass, cavern wall, cave floor, etc. The polymorph can imitate virtually any inanimate object and is still able to move at its natural movement rate, though movement is a dead giveaway for a supposedly inanimate object. It can, depending on the form, grasp and hold a pony or a PC while the rest of the creature is polymorphing into another shape. Example: The polymorph, in the shape of a tree, despecializes a branch and respecializes it into a constricting snake. The snake grabs and holds a victim while the rest of the polymorph changes into an owlbear — with one paw in snake form, which loosens its grip long enough to change into a paw and strike at the victim.

6. Protein polymorph in natural form (AC 2; MV 9"; HD 6; hp 27; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; AL CN; FF/73). In its natural form, the polymorph looks like a mound of glistening gray clay or a giant gray amoeba. The attack form of the polymorph is to enfold and crush its victim for 6-36 hp damage per round. Protein polymorphs seldom use their natural form, so the DM may wish to roll again for a new shape.

The DM is free to add to or change the list of imitated creatures in this table. If, for any reason, the DM does not want the polymorph to use one of the listed shapes, he should change it to one of his own. If the DM wishes to lengthen the list, other possible monsters to be imitated include the anhkheg, giant beetle, giant lizard, hook horror, myconid, and (a small) dragon. The DM need only keep in mind the protein polymorph's size — it cannot imitate a large dinosaur or a tarrasque — and the creature's inability to duplicate special abilities — it cannot imitate a grell, volt, or flumph because it cannot levitate. The polymorph cannot fly, even though it can imitate a winged creature. Ω

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U.S. General Services Administration

A QUESTION OF BALANCE

BY NIGEL D. FINDLEY

It pays to call ahead before you travel.

Artwork by Jim Holloway

Nigel writes that things are going well in Vancouver. He has added the sport of fencing (foil and saber) to his repertoire. "As well as introducing me to muscle groups I didn't know I had, it's given me considerable respect for the fighter class," he says. On the writing side, two magazines have picked up Nigel's monthly "Computers in Business" column. This is Nigel's fourth appearance in DUNGEON® Adventures.

"A Question of Balance" is an AD&D® game scenario for 4-6 characters of 8th to 12th level and of any race, class or alignment. This adventure takes place in the FORGOTTEN REALMS™ setting; nevertheless, it can be inserted into any DM's game world with little or no modification.

For the Dungeon Master

Havenmere (area 1) is a village in Cormyr (or Sembia — it depends on whom you ask) amongst the Thunder Peaks, a mile or two south of Thunder Gap. The village, small by any scale, is situated on the shores of a tiny lake (also named Havenmere) that nestles in a notch in the otherwise forbidding mountains. The lake (area 2) is deep, clear, and very cold. The soil along its shores is a bit more fertile than anywhere else nearby, so it is here that the villagers have planted their crops.

Life is hard in Havenmere. Its two-score families eke out a living by coaxing sickly crops from the barely fertile soil and by raising a distinct strain of hardy, bad-tempered sheep that graze on the slopes around the village. None of the villagers knows why Havenmere was founded in such a forbidding locale, and none cares. The village *is*, that's all that matters, and the villagers must make the best of it. Havenmere has no significant trade with anybody, for the good reason that travelers generally visit the village only if they are lost.

The PCs arrive in the vicinity of Havenmere by whatever means is appropriate (perhaps they, like others before them, are lost in the vastness of the Thunder Peaks). As they approach the village, they are lashed by a sudden and unnatural storm. Wind howls through the chasms, looming clouds cover the sun, rain falls in torrents, and the air is filled with sheets and bolts of emerald lightning. This convulsion of nature, which is totally unaffected by

weather-summoning magic, lasts just long enough to drench the PCs to the skin and make them thoroughly miserable. Then, as suddenly as it began, the storm vanishes and the sky is clear again. The PCs are free to press on unimpeded into the village.

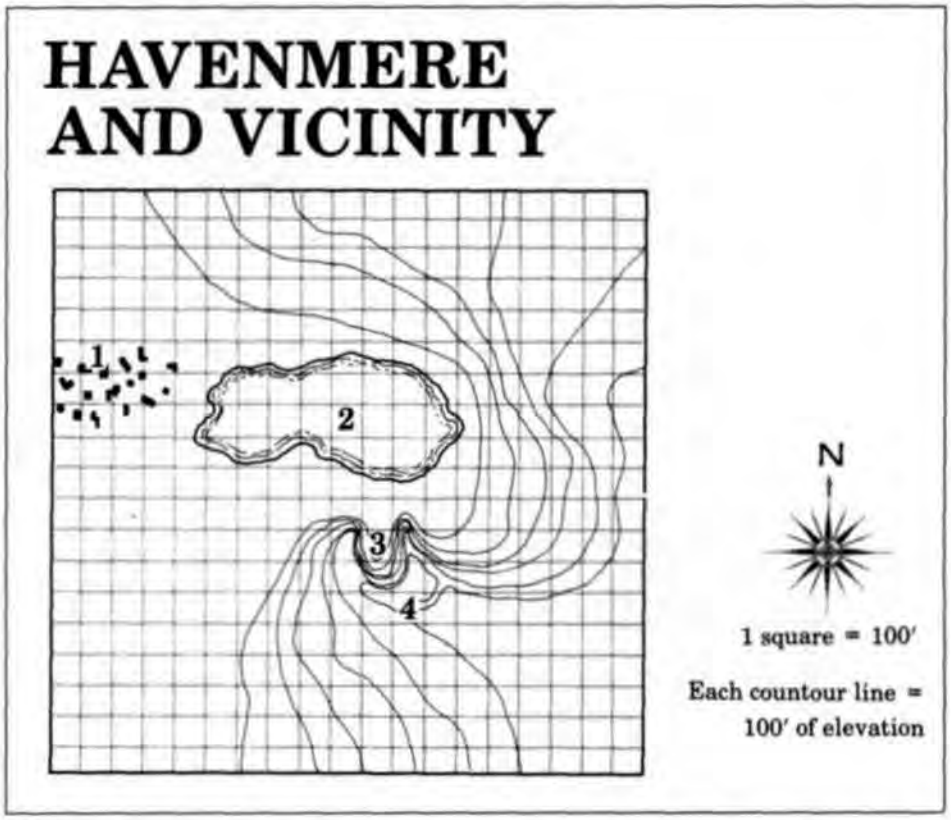
The Welcoming Committee

When they arrive in Havenmere, the PCs find the villagers too occupied to pay them any mind. In fact, the locals are in the middle of a lynching. Tied to a stake in the village square is a very confused, ineffectual-looking man dressed in outlandish clothes: a gray three-piece outfit with a strip of colored cloth knotted around his neck, highly polished low black boots on his feet, and a gold bracelet on his left wrist. A villager is just about to put a torch to the kindling piled around the victim's feet. As the PCs come into view, the victim starts yelling to them in an unknown tongue. Even though his words are unintelligible, it's clear that he's begging for help.

Why would a mob of farmers be so moved to burn someone at the stake? If the PCs can distract any of the villagers long enough to ask, the answer they get is simple: The "man" is a demon! He appeared in the village square in a flash of emerald fire while the villagers were cowering from the sudden storm. It was obvious to them that the demon created the magical storm to strike fear into their hearts before laying waste to their homes. But a couple of the stouter-hearted farmers bound him before he could summon his demonic magic. Now they've got the demon at their mercy, and they're going to kill him before he kills them. As evidence supporting this story — as if any other evidence were necessary — villagers point to the captive's attire. See the symbol of the hangman's noose knotted around his neck? He must be a death spirit of some kind.

Farmers (25): AC 10; MV 12"; zero-level humans; hp 3-6 each; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; AL N; five villagers have clubs, two have pitchforks (as military forks, −1 to hit and damage), and four have knives, the rest being unarmed.

Unless the PCs intervene, the kindling is lit and the "demon" dies unpleasantly in the fire. If the PCs convince the peasants to stop the lynching long enough to establish communication with the "demon" (through a *tongues* spell, for example), he relates a bizarre tale.



One Demon . . .

His name is Simon Weems, the man announces in an understandably rattled manner, and he denies being a demon. In fact, he claims to be something called an insurance salesman from a place known as Lake Geneva in Wisconsin. Of course, none of the PCs know of this land; maybe it's in some distant part of the Realms. Weems has little idea of how he got into his present predicament. He'd just gotten out of something called a car when a freak storm blew up out of nowhere, and he was struck by a bolt of green lightning. While he was still dazzled by the glare and wondering if this was how it felt to be dead, he was fallen upon by several crudely dressed but very strong fellows and trussed for barbecue. He is now fervently hoping that either: a) he will wake up, or b) some personage called St. Peter will tell him that this is all a joke and escort him through the Pearly Gates.

Weems can tell the PCs wondrous tales about his world — ships flying through the sky, moving pictures on a box, ovens that cook food in seconds, etc. — but he can't explain to them how any of it works. (If your players complain about this, suggest that they find some tribesmen from New Guinea and explain to them, without the aid of books, exactly how to build a video cassette recorder.) The only neato stuff Weems can show the PCs is his Rolex watch (stopped), his pager (inert), and a gold Cross pen (which has run out of ink). These items might have some value if the right buyer can be found. At the very least, the pen could be melted down for its gold (1 gp worth).

Simon Weems: AC 10; MV 12"; zero-level human; hp 3; #AT 1 (but unarmed); Dmg nil; S 7, I 11, W 10, D 9, C 7, Ch 10; AL NG (with lawful tendencies). Weems's comparatively low strength and constitution scores do not imply he is a wimp, merely that he is used to a more civilized, sedentary lifestyle. It might prove difficult for the PCs to convince Weems that he isn't having a nightmare, and that the world he is now in is as real as the one from which he came. Once they do get the point across,

Weems states very dogmatically that he wants to go home, and he asks them what they are going to do about it.

Although this is not primarily a comic module, Weems's predicament and his reaction to it can and should be played for laughs. If the PCs perceive this to be a silly adventure, the impact of their eventual foe will be stronger.

The villagers are unwilling to let Weems live, still believing him to be a demon, but bow to the requests — and to the superior weaponry — of the PCs. Once the uproar has died down, several of the locals approach the PCs with another piece of bizarre news.

. . . Is Not Enough

When Weems appeared in the middle of their street, the villagers relate, he wasn't alone. Another humanoid figure appeared in the same flash of light. This other figure was only dimly seen. While Weems was disoriented for several seconds, the other being immediately ran off into the storm, heading for the mountains. Could this second figure be another demon?

Weems can shed no light on this mystery figure. When he was struck by lightning in Lake Geneva, he was alone. When he appeared here — wherever here is — he was too stunned to notice anything until he realized that a fire was being laid around his Guccis.

While this discussion is going on, another local steps forward. He is a venerable old man named **Senecus** (AC 10; MV 9″; zero-level human; hp 4; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; AL LG), who many decades ago served a wizard as bottle-washer and laboratory assistant. This mage enjoyed discussing points of arcane philosophy with Senecus, who still remembers much of what they talked about (although he understands little of it).

The strange lightning and the mysterious appearances remind Senecus of something the mage called "spontaneous gates." Apparently, when conditions are right, temporary gates can open, connecting different universes, and matter can move between them. Such movements are always balanced. The most common phenomenon is a direct exchange — something from universe A goes to universe B while something from universe B goes to universe A. Infrequently, something from universe A and something from universe B both go to universe C. This "vector balance," the mage told Senecus, is like moving equal weights from both ends of a balanced plank equal distances toward the center. Might not the other figure, Senecus speculates, be a creature from yet another universe equally removed from the PCs' world?

Senecus provides another gem of wisdom. He remembers that his mentor speculated that a spontaneous gate could be reopened by taking the objects or creatures that came through and bringing them together again (although not necessarily in the same place they appeared). If Weems and the other being can be brought into proximity, the gate should reopen and each will be returned to his respective plane.

Note: Senecus is offered as a convenient way to channel the PCs' thinking in the correct direction. If your players are of a philosophical bent, they might already have come up with a similar hypothesis, in which case Senecus need not put in an appearance.

The PCs will probably be interested in investigating this other "demon." If not, Senecus points out the possible danger to the village if the figure is, in fact, another death spirit (or worse) and humbly begs the "noble adventurers" to find out.

The Game Is Afoot

The second being's trail is easy to follow. If the PCs pursue it in the direction that the villagers indicate (roughly southeast), they soon come upon evidence of the creature's presence — and of its intentions. Just outside the village lies the carcass of a sheep. It has been shredded by claws and seared by fire. The creature's track then leads through one of the village's small fields. Its path is clear through the destroyed crops, lit by fires that are still burning. The trail of destruction ends at a rocky escarpment and a rugged chasm that leads up into the mountains.

The chasm (area 3) and the escarpment are both difficult to climb. The rock is rough and jagged, wet from the storm, and treacherous. Here and there are patches of lichen (when wet, these are as slippery as banana peels). Stunted bushes grow here and there; none are firmly rooted enough to give purchase when climbing or to save a falling character. Ropes and other climbing aids are not required, although they could prove useful, but the terrain is rough enough to reduce effective movement rates to 4″ for encumbered PCs and 6″ for PCs who carry less than 30 lbs. of gear. For each turn of climbing, each PC must roll 1d20. If the result exceeds the PC's dexterity, he slips and falls for 1d10 hp of abrasion and contusion damage (save vs. spells for half damage). Alternatively, the DM can use the climbing rules in the *Wilderness Survival Guide*, pages 33-39.

The area is unrelievedly grim looking. The only color comes from the bitter, blood-red berries that grow on the stunted bushes and from occasional patches of tough grass. Signs of the creature's passage are numerous: score-marks on the rocks from claws, an occasional bush that has been shredded or set afire for no visible reason, etc. The trail continues up the chasm for several hundred very difficult yards.

PCs who fly, levitate, or otherwise travel without climbing find it difficult to see the trail of the "demon" unless they stay very close to the rocks. Strong winds that funnel through the chasm make this a very tricky undertaking. PCs who indicate their desire to fly close to the rock face have a 10% chance per round of being blown into the rocks and taking 1d6 hp of abrasion and contusion damage (save vs. spells for half damage).

Unless the PCs have been completely silent during their ascent, the "demon" is aware that it is being followed. Enjoying the prospect of a scrap, it chooses an appropriate place for an ambush: a rocky ledge (area 4) about 30′ wide and 80′ long that overlooks the chasm. From here, it has a good vantage point to observe and attack the approaching PCs. Its chosen position also offers it 75% cover (+7 to armor class against missile fire; *DMG*, page 64) until it actually engages in combat.

The Demon

The "demon" is a humanoid figure about 6′ tall, with a broad and very muscular physique. It is totally hairless, and its skin is gray with an almost metallic sheen. Its four-fingered hands show wickedly curved claws, frighteningly sharp. Its head is smaller in proportion to its body than a human's, and is set on a short, thick neck. The creature has no external ears or nose; its two large nostrils are set into its broad

face just above a wide, fanged mouth. Its red eyes are small and protected by circular ridges of bone. When it exerts itself, it sweats; after its climb, its body glistens with moisture. This perspiration is strongly acidic, doing 1-4 hp damage to flesh that comes in contact with it. The creature's sweat has a bitter reek, which might be the first warning the PCs have of its presence.

"Demon": AC −2; MV 12" (8" on rock face); HD 14; hp 80; #AT 3; Dmg 2-12 + 4/2-12 + 4/1-10; SA major magic use; poisonous saliva, acidic sweat, strength bonus of +2 to hit; SD hit only by magical weapons, regenerates 3 hp per round starting on third round after damage occurs, numerous immunities (to *sleep, suggestion, hypnotism, charm, hold, paralyzation,* all fire-based spells, acid, poison, normal fire, and psionic attack), 70% magic resistance; AL NE.

The creature attacks with a claw/claw/bite routine. As its physique indicates, it is very strong (18/76), giving it a bonus of +2 "to hit" and +4 to damage (this damage bonus does not apply to the creature's bite). Like its sweat, the creature's saliva is acidic and highly toxic. A victim of its bite must save vs. poison or take an additional 3-24 hp damage.

The creature has a daunting number of magical abilities, each similar to the spell of the same name and cast at the 25th level of ability. It can use the following spell-like powers once per round: *feather fall, magic missile* (13 missiles), *fumble, gust of wind, heat metal, slow,* and *shatter.* It can use the following spell-like powers twice per turn: *jump, fireball, delayed blast fireball, confusion, shocking grasp,* and *blindness.* It can use the following spell-like powers once per day: *fire storm, wall of fire, earthquake, tongues, suggestion, reverse gravity,* and *power word stun.* All of these abilities can be used instantly with no casting time, preparation, or continued concentration required. The creature is highly intelligent and uses its abilities to their best effects, often combining powers in damaging "one-two punches" — for example, casting both *heat metal* and *slow* spells on an armor-clad opponent, or casting *confusion* and *blindness* spells on characters who are trying to climb the rock face. A DM with a nasty streak can, no doubt, devise equally potent combinations. The creature is susceptible to falling damage and crushing damage from an avalanche (should it use its *earthquake* power), but it sustains only half normal damage in this event (save vs. wands for one-quarter damage).

Although the creature can regenerate 3 hp damage per round starting on the third round after the damage ocurred, once it is dead (−10 hp) it is dead. It does not revive like a troll, although severed limbs will crawl back to rejoin the still-living creature.

The creature's thoughts are so alien that *ESP* or *telepathy* have only a limited chance of contacting the creature's mind (taking into account its magic resistance and saving throws). However, a successful connection opens the caster's mind to such a welter of alien thoughts and emotions that he is *confused* for 2-9 rounds (save vs. spells for half duration). The creature's senses are supernaturally acute; it can *hear noise* (as the thief ability) on a 7 in 8 chance, has infra- and ultravision of 120' range, and can automatically detect invisible objects and characters. Even if blinded (by a *darkness* spell, for example), its

other senses compensate enough so that its penalty in combat is only −1 (rather than the normal −4).

Despite its magical abilities, and despite what the villagers believe, the creature is not a demon nor any other denizen of the Outer Planes. Thus, it is unaffected by holy water or clerical turning. The banishment effect of a *holy word*, however, will send the creature back to its home, since it is a being from an alternate Prime Material Plane (as is Simon Weems).

On its home plane, the creature is an example of the dominant life form, a thoroughly evil race dedicated to the destruction of all "lower" forms of life. Although it arrived on this plane by accident, it is quite pleased by its surroundings. The rugged mountains remind it of its home world, and the life forms it has seen — the villagers and the PCs — seem ideal targets for its evil intentions. Unlike Weems, it has no desire to return to its home. Instead, it is already considering ways to inflict destruction on the greatest possible scale. The creature cares nothing for torture or spreading terror — it merely wishes to destroy all life.

Combat with the creature will probably take place on and around the ledge it has chosen. If it has the chance, it will ambush the PCs as they climb up from below, raking them with *magic missiles* and *delayed blast fireballs*. Any flying PC who is unaware of the creature's presence is likely to be greeted by a salvo of *magic missiles* as he clears the lip of the ledge.

The ledge is a treacherous place to do battle with so powerful a creature. With a sheer rock face on one side, a sheer drop of 80′ on the other, and the chasm at one end, there is not much room for combat. Any PC who stumbles or is otherwise driven off the ledge faces a very damaging fall (20d6 hp damage). This is a particular risk for *confused* characters, who will be unable to save themselves with spells such as *feather fall*.

The creature is intelligent enough to know when a fight is going against it. If it is unable to flee, it uses its *tongues* and *suggestion* abilities to bargain for its life. It offers the PCs great wealth and even greater knowledge, claiming all sorts of wondrous powers and abilities (none of which it possesses). As its behavior indicates, however, it is a treacherous creature and won't abide by any deal it makes. As soon as it senses an opportunity, it turns on the PCs and slays them or makes its escape.

Concluding the Adventure

Senecus was right in his description of spontaneous gates and vector balances, and of how such gates can be reopened. If the PCs bring Weems and the creature within 10′ of one another, and if both are still alive, the gate reopens. This phenomenon is accompanied by a storm similar to that which originally lashed the PCs. Weems and the creature are engulfed in a flash of green light and vanish. Weems is returned unharmed (apart from the shock to his sanity) to Lake Geneva; the creature is returned to its home plane. This effect is limited to the two extradimensional travelers; nothing and no one can be "taken along for the ride" under any circumstances. Note that the winds caused by this magical storm are redoubled in force by the chasms and gullies of the mountainside. If the PCs are still on the rocky ledge when the gate reopens, each character must roll under his dexterity on 4d6 or be swept from the ledge and suffer 20d6 hp falling damage. If either Weems or the creature is dead, the gate will not reopen and the survivor is stuck on this plane.

The villagers are grateful to the PCs for saving them from the demon, but not *too* grateful as they aren't aware of how great a threat it actually was. They re-equip and care for the PCs to the best of their abilities, but they aren't inclined to reward them in any monetary way. Surely saving the land from demons is just a day's work for an adventuring company?

If the PCs have slain the creature, Simon Weems has no way to get home, and his life on this plane is a short one. Within three weeks, he grows sickly, pale, and thin, and no clerical attentions can cure him. A month after his arrival, he dies of malnutrition (his diet requires a certain amino acid that does not exist in the Realms).

If the creature still lives, it keeps a low profile for several weeks while it learns more about its new surroundings. Then its predator's nature and joy in destruction reassert themselves. First, the creature falls upon the village of Havenmere and ravages it, then it terrorizes travelers passing through Thunder Gap. Afterward, it ranges eastward toward Highmoon and Deepingdale. Unless the monster is slain, the villages and towns of Sembia soon begin to feel its depradations. Future adventures can easily be built around the PCs' quest to destroy the creature once and for all. Ω

Encounter Table

Should the PCs spend enough time in the area to warrant random encounters, the DM can use the following table (roll 1d6). The statistics for each creature are found in either the *Monster Manual* (MM1), *Monster Manual II* (MM2), or FIEND FOLIO® tome (FF), with the page numbers indicated after the slash mark.

1d6	Day	Night
1	Spider, large (1): MM1/90	Spider, large (1): MM1/90
2	Vulture (1-2): MM2/125	Bat, giant (2-4): FF/14
3	Scorpion, large (1-3): MM2/107	Bat, giant (2-8): FF/14
4	Bloodhawk (2-12): FF/15	Orcs (2-8): MM1/76
5	Havenmere sheep* (1-8)	Wolf (2-8): MM1/101
6	Eagle, giant (1): MM1/36	Wolf, worg (1-4): MM1/101

* AC 8; MV 12″ (6″ on rock face); HD 1; #AT 1 bite or butt; Dmg 1-2 or see below; SA butt; AL N. Havenmere sheep are bad-tempered, robust creatures. Though they don't look for trouble, they're likely to bite if disturbed. If they have enough space (20′) for a short charge, they try to butt an opponent for 1-4 hp damage. The target of the butt must roll under his dexterity on 4d6 or be knocked down (with potentially fatal consequences on the mountainside). Havenmere sheep can climb as surely as mountain goats.

STRANDED ON THE BARON'S ISLAND

BY WILLIE WALSH

Not even the furniture is quite what it seems.

Artwork by Valerie Valusek

Readers of past works by the author will recognize Willie's preference for intrigue and humor in this scenario. He claims the basic idea came to him while "people watching" on a night out. He also says he enjoyed the creation of each of the NPCs immensely.

"Stranded on the Baron's Island" is an AD&D® module designed for use with a group of 2-4 characters of 4th-6th level. It may be played as a separate adventure or as part of a campaign at the Dungeon Master's discretion.

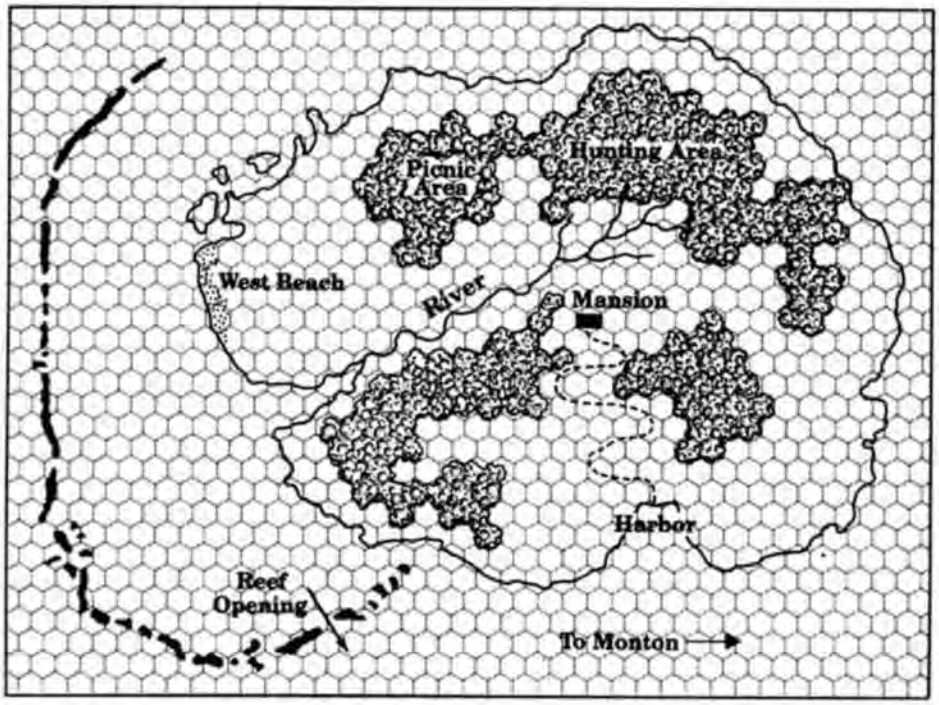
For the Dungeon Master

Unlike other modules, this one is more of an adventure setting with an open-ended plot line. The PCs are stranded on a small island on which a baron's mansion lies. The mansion, filled with a small crowd of wealthy and unusual NPCs, becomes the scene of a jewel robbery, which the PCs may attempt to solve while they await rescue (see "The Jewel Theft"). As monsters are scarce in this scenario, the PCs should lean toward investigative role-playing as opposed to the "hack and slay" mentality. You should become familiar with all the NPCs, their motives, and their relevance to the plot. Proper play of this module will require considerable work on your part, but the module may lend itself well to experimental methods of running the game, such as having multiple DMs (to run various groups of NPCs or manage divided PC parties).

All of the baron's guests are first listed briefly, then detailed more thoroughly in the areas in which they are most likely to be encountered (these area numbers are referenced in the section "Baron Ruga's Guests"). In most cases, an NPC's bedroom is unoccupied during the day. The adventurers may find the guests in their rooms, however, if the PCs explore the mansion at nightfall or daybreak.

To properly run this module, the NPCs should not remain in the locations where they are described. They have full access to all of the places the adventurers may go and move about as they like. The use of a random encounter table is discouraged as this would produce unlikely meetings with NPCs. Instead, you may wish to establish a daily schedule of each NPC's activities, leaving it open-ended to allow for any involvement or direction by the PCs.

THE BARON'S ISLAND



1 hex = 300'

The guests have been invited to Baron Ruga's mansion to enjoy themselves, and they will make full use of the island's amenities (weather permitting), usually in large groups but not necessarily all together. Use your own judgment when deciding who goes where with whom. The PCs may decide to stay behind to keep an eye on things or to take advantage of the absence of certain people to investigate their rooms.

The guests often act suspiciously: going for a sandwich at midnight, trying to talk privately to the baron, lurking about in a senile daze (in the case of the general), looking for books or documents (especially Frugglehoffer or Moonfellow), or performing other innocent or not-so-innocent acts.

Being castaways, the PCs are granted a certain amount of consideration and will not immediately be openly blamed for the jewel theft, though many NPCs may privately suspect them of it. The adventurers should be given any reasonable assistance by Baron Ruga in investigating the theft and looking for clues. Before the theft actually occurs, however, the people in the mansion have justifiable grounds for resenting any intrusion on their privacy. Therefore, the PCs should not be allowed to have the run of the building when they arrive at the front door. Even adventurers must show some respect for the rights of others.

Time: The guests were invited for a week at the mansion; their ship dropped them off three days ago, and they have three days left until that same ship (rescue for the PCs!) arrives to take them back to Cambium State's mainland. The jewel robbery is scheduled to take place on the next night after the PCs arrive, leaving only a day and a half until the ship arrives (at noontime) to find the jewels.

Weather: After the storm which stranded the PCs clears, you should determine the weather on the island. Generally, the weather should be good, with a light shower now and then to keep NPCs indoors if you so desire. Outdoor activities at the picnic grounds or the beach might be helpful, and NPCs might wish to walk around the island during the morning and evening.

For the Adventurers

> In the dark of a moonless night, the ship on which you have booked passage runs aground on a reef at the southwestern end of a small island. A heavy rain begins to fall, and as the sailors bail furiously, the ship's captain shoves you into a lifeboat with orders to row toward the lights visible on shore.
>
> As your small craft grates onto the sandy beach, you look back to see that your ship has managed to refloat itself and is limping onward through the storm — with no thought of rescue for stranded passengers.

Flesh out this section as much as you like. While it is crucial that the PCs make it to the island, exactly how they accomplish this is irrelevant. In any case, the lights from the mansion are not difficult to see, and there are no hostile wandering monsters on the island.

Upon first meeting the baron and his guests at the mansion, the PCs will discover that they have accidentally crashed an upper-class gathering. How-

ever, the PCs will in time learn that nothing is quite as it seems. . . .

The Baron Who Is Not

A coastal country of small size and few wealthy people, Cambium State is an out-of-the-way sort of place. Because of its relative isolation, new ideas are slow to germinate in the minds of any of the citizens of Cambium. Therefore, the rigid class system of a few very rich lording it over the masses of the poor has remained largely unchanged over the last few centuries. The wealthy take their position as an inalienable right — something which has always been and which will always be.

Thus, Lord Brigholsom, mayor of the town of Sunforst, was understandably surprised when his equally affluent friend Baron Whitefriar, retired mayor of Monton, commented one evening at the dinner table on the nature of man. Whitefriar, Brigholsom's best friend and confidant for years, brought up the proposition that all men are basically made of the same stuff — wealth and poverty being merely a question of economic circumstances.

Brigholsom was horrified by this idea and pointed out that the upper class (of which he was proud to be a distinguished member) was intrinsically different from the peasants. Manners, education, and nobility were the aristocracy's rights.

Whitefriar refuted this as a misconception propagated by the rich to keep the peasants in their place. A peasant, he explained, is different from a lord only because he lacks the refinements that can be bought by those who can afford them. Education in the correct ways of doing things could turn a pauper into a king.

Brigholsom, intent on proving his friend wrong, consented to bet Whitefriar the sum of 5,000 gold pieces to prove his theory, and together the two men devised a test. While the finale was to occur a year later, the first step of the plan was implemented on Whitefriar's journey home to Monton. He ordered his coachman to stop as they passed a simple peasant waiting, cap in hand, by the side of the road. Looking about to make sure his actions were unobserved, Whitefriar hustled the bewildered fellow, a young farmer named Ruga, into his coach and sped away to a little-used island retreat he kept for infrequent vacations. After letting it be known that he planned to travel abroad extensively, Whitefriar secretly took up residence on the island, where he and his manservant, Peter Curlflower, spent the next year tutoring the peasant to play the role of Baron Ruga, a recent arrival in Cambium and wealthy beyond any peasant's dreams. In fact, Whitefriar even spread the word that Baron Ruga had purchased the island and mansion from him, going so far as to maintain this charade to the staff he has hired (except for his manservant, Peter Curlflower).

The final step in the experiment is an elegant house party on the island, at which Whitefriar's theory is to be tested. Thirteen of the most influential people in Cambium have been invited to be Baron Ruga's guests at a week-long celebration of his arrival in Cambium and acquisition of the island estate. The real purpose of the gathering, as Whitefriar boasted, is to show that the "discerning rich" in reality can't tell the difference between a peasant and a baron.

The Jewel Theft

The theft of the Southbourne Jewels is scheduled to occur about midnight, 24 hours after the PCs unexpectedly arrive on the island. Details on the jewel theft are given with the character description of Dorval Primperson in area 34. The theft should go off without a hitch unless the PCs accidentally or purposefully interfere with the operation (you should be prepared to "wing it" in this event). Once the theft becomes known, Baron Ruga will secretly consult with Baron Whitefriar; then Baron Ruga will offer the PCs a reward for helping solve the mystery, if the PCs seem to be trustworthy enough. A total of 500 gp per PC is offered, along with Baron Ruga's (distant) assistance. No one at the gathering is openly blamed; Baron Ruga suggests (though neither he nor Whitefriar seriously believes) that thieves may have landed on the island to pull off the theft.

The theft dominates all conversation and activities after it occurs. Few NPCs are willing to go out alone, and they jealously guard whatever valuables

Baron Ruga's Guests

Baron Whitefriar: Landowner and retired mayor of the town of Monton; the real owner of the island on which Baron Ruga's mansion is located. See area 5 for statistics.

Lord Brigholsom: Friend and confidant of Baron Whitefriar; landowner and mayor of the town of Sunforst. See area 7 for statistics.

General Godwald Rolfveld: Retired army officer and debt-ridden landowner; slightly eccentric and more than a little senile. See area 16 for statistics.

Ismarellda Gwinervan: Abbess of the Monastery of Ckel; head of a powerful order of neutral-good clerics. See area 26 for statistics.

Saldv Frugglehoffer: Unscrupulous dwarven merchant and businessperson. See area 17 for statistics.

Gorden Gromweaver: Undertaker to the rich and powerful. See area 22 for statistics.

Lilly Gromweaver: Wife and unwilling business partner of Gorden Gromweaver. See area 22 for statistics.

Marita Southbourne: Widow and heiress to a fortune in diamonds; owner of the Southbourne Jewels, an extremely valuable diamond necklace. See area 23 for statistics.

Dorval Primperson: Famous half-elven lawyer, secretly the infamous jewel thief known as the Black Hand. See area 34 for statistics.

Gerald Moonfellow: Prominent member of the local magic-users guild — and accomplice of the Black Hand. See area 11 for statistics.

Laura Livingstone: Unmarried heiress to a shaky fortune — and therefore a fortune hunter. See area 30 for statistics.

Mary-Ellen Gooderingson: Spoiled daughter of a famous judge and identical twin of Ellen-Mary Gooderingson. See area 24 for statistics.

Ellen-Mary Gooderingson: Identical twin of Mary-Ellen Gooderingson. See area 31 for statistics.

they have left. The PCs are natural suspects, though the guests are too polite to mention it for the first few hours after the event. As time goes on, however, some NPCs may become very hostile toward the PCs if no attempts to ease the situation are made.

Baron Whitefriar isn't sure if the PCs are guilty or not — but having once been an adventurer, he admires all adventurers and is willing to give them the benefit of the doubt. Besides, he finds that he admires a clever thief.

The Mansion of Baron Ruga

The following should be read or paraphrased to the players as the PCs approach the mansion after coming ashore.

> The lights you saw from the ship are coming from a large mansion of grand design. Most of the ground floor is lit, and outside lanterns illuminate the area immediately around the building. A great glass dome above the west wing sparkles against the night sky with the light of a thousand candles. At the front of the house, a recessed doorway dominates the center of a long and impressive colonnade. Two figures, perhaps doormen, can be seen silhouetted against the light coming through the windows. The rain grows steadily worse, prompting you to seek shelter immediately.

The island on which the mansion rests lies securely within normal sea lanes, and there is little chance of it being taken over by pirates (armed warships cruise by the island periodically to look it over). It has no real name as such, though seamen call it "Whitefriar's Island" after the Baron who owns it. Word has not spread far that the island was "sold" to Ruga, though it would not matter if it did; the seamen will always call it "Whitefriar's Island."

The island's mansion was built for Whitefriar two decades ago, but the baron has used it only infrequently until the past year. When Whitefriar is not in residence, the island is uninhabited (except for the mimic and now the doppleganger from area 3). Neither the mimic nor the doppleganger has been discovered, though Curlflower has told Whitefriar that something is stealing food from the kitchen. The two believe that small animals are somehow getting into the building and plan to hire workmen to find and plug up any holes as soon as the house party is over.

The reef on the western end of the island is usually avoided by ships, though the absence of a lighthouse has been a problem (as the PCs' near-shipwreck here reveals). A natural harbor on the southern side of the island is used to drop off supplies for the mansion's inhabitants. A small "river" (actually a large creek), numerous trees, rolling ground, brilliant green grass and flowers, a small western beach, and generally warm and pleasant weather make the island ideal as a getaway place. Local wildlife consists almost entirely of birds, with a few small animals (mice, rats, and squirrels) in the woods and around the mansion. The sea life around the island is pleasant and so far includes no dangerous monsters, except for a rare shark or two. No wandering monsters are present, except for the mimic and doppleganger.

The mansion's second floor is 15' above the ground floor. Each staircase rises and descends 5' per 5' of length as shown on the maps of the mansion itself. All windows (interior and exterior) have glass, but each may be opened by hand. The windows have no locks on them. All doors may be opened normally and have locks, but unless otherwise noted they are initially considered to be unlocked. After the jewel theft, the guests will tend to lock their doors at all times.

Ground Floor

1. Entrance and Colonnade. The main entrance is protected by the overhanging upper level of the building, providing a little shelter from the rain. The pillars supporting the colonnade are made from imported marble and announce to visitors the wealth of the mansion's owner. But the most striking feature of the mansion is the vast quantity of glass used in its construction — glass being a rarity in almost any medieval-level culture.

If any party members advance to within 50' of the building, they are spotted by the doormen, Sid and Fred. Sid steps warily out into the rainy night to meet them, while Fred goes to find Lord Whitefriar's manservant, Peter Curlflower, who arrives in four rounds to see who has come to call.

Doormen (2): AC 10; F1; hp 6 (Sid), 5 (Fred); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; statistics unremarkable; AL N; cudgel. Sid and Fred share a room in the attic (see area 32).

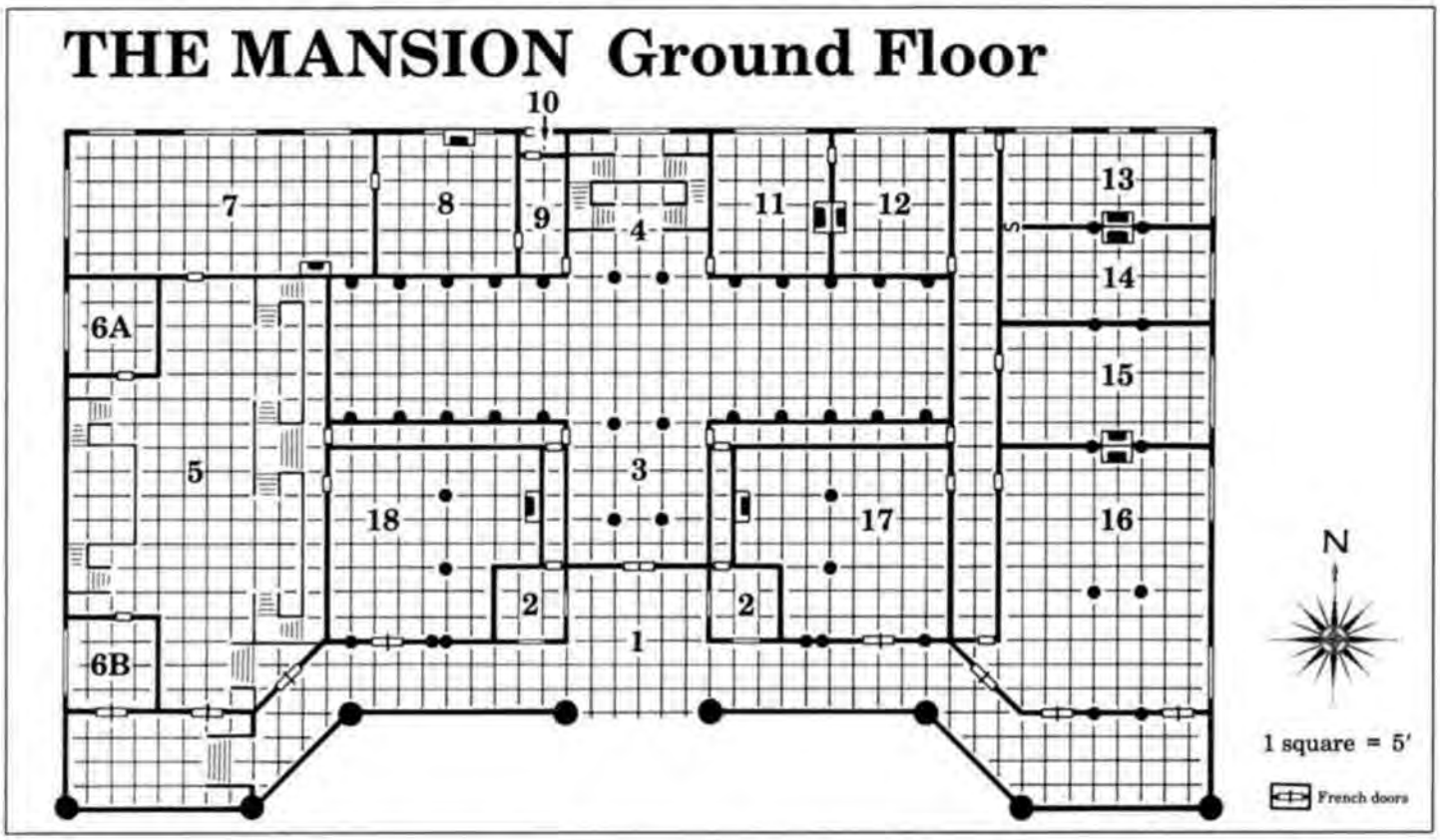
On hearing the adventurers' plight, Curlflower shows them inside and brings them to the morning room (area 15) where he leaves them to rest while he alerts "the master of the house" (meaning both Ruga and Baron Whitefriar) to their predicament. Use the room descriptions to detail the areas the PCs pass through on the way to the morning room.

Peter Curlflower has been with Baron Whitefriar for 20 years, in which time he has grown both in loyalty and devotion to his master. They have traveled extensively together in the wide world, and their experiences are reflected in the strange and sometimes inexplicable opinions which Whitefriar voices from time to time. Though slightly authoritarian with the rest of the servants, Curlflower is an invaluable and respected member of the staff and the real force behind the seemingly easy running of the household. For the duration of the party, Peter has been placed in charge of household affairs, though he makes it clear that he still considers himself the servant of Baron Whitefriar.

Curlflower took the task of tutoring the peasant Ruga as just one more strange adventure on behalf of his master. He has performed the task admirably, for he has the gift of remembering the correct procedures, language, and mannerisms acceptable among the upper class. In the process, he has become firm friends with the would-be baron; after the experiment's conclusion, he plans to use the contacts he has made over the years of his association with Whitefriar to place Ruga in a good position instead of returning him to the muck of the road where he was found.

Curlflower remains detached and aloof from all official functions of the party. He is at all times the functional "invisible servant." While polite and cordial, he doesn't waste words, a trait drilled into him by the general disinterest of his "betters" in all that a manservant might say.

While Curlflower heartily endorses his master's opinions on the nature of man, he believes Whitefriar's exploitation of Ruga is less than proper. He will



not, however, do anything to disrupt the charade, even going to the extreme of telling important information to Ruga (the supposed master of the house) before informing his real master.

Peter Curlflower, manservant: AC 7; MV 12"; F3; hp 21; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); S 16, I 16, W 15, D 17, C 17, Ch 15; AL NG. Curlflower's room is at area 20 upstairs.

2. Doormens' Posts. From these rooms, the doormen keep watch on the approach to the house. The only furniture in each drab chamber is a peculiar one-legged stool, upon which each doorman is required to sit so that he doesn't fall asleep while on duty. The drafty and unheated rooms have two windows each, from which the approach to the house and the front doors may be viewed.

The doormen, Sid and Fred, are talkative once their initial distrust of strangers is overcome. The only item of interest they can relate is the fact that a musician from the mainland, who had been hired to play music for the week-long ball, was imprisoned in the mansion by Baron Ruga for stealing. Neither Sid nor Fred had a chance to get to know the musician, but they think it was just as well they didn't. They also say that the entire staff (except for Peter Curlflower) was hired especially for the duration of the celebration; none of the servants are familiar with each other or with any of the guests in the house. The man in charge of the island (they say) is Baron Ruga, assisted by the manservant of Baron Whitefriar, Peter Curlflower.

The report about the musician refers to one Hadrian Bassman, who unfortunately recognized Ruga from stories he had heard on the mainland. The disappearance of the peasant who is now Baron Ruga led to quite a bit of talk, and Bassman heard his description and many wild rumors about his disappearance while traveling to his job on the island. Thinking that Ruga was up to something unlawful, Bassman took it upon himself to discuss the matter with Whitefriar. The musician soon found himself lying bound and gagged in the disused east wing of the upper floor (see area 38 for details).

3. The Inner Hall.

Constructed more as a show of grandeur than a functional part of the house, this hall is huge and vaulted. Much of the detail work here seems unnecessary, an extravagance on the part of the builder. Pictures of the owner's ancestors line the walls, accompanied by ancient pieces of armor and bric-a-brac.

The paintings all show a resemblance to Ruga — not surprising, really, since they are all fakes. An adventurer with the secondary skill of limner/painter (see *DMG,* page 12) has a 50% chance to notice that the portraits have been freshly painted. If asked about this, Curlflower, Whitefriar, or Ruga replies that there has been quite a bit of restoration work done on the paintings lately — perhaps that's the reason why they look newer than might be expected.

The other objects placed about the inner hall include a full suit of military plate armor which Whitefriar acquired on the mainland some years ago; a stuffed elephant head mounted on the

wall at the top of the stairs; an antique sideboard whose drawers are empty; four unmatched antique chairs; a mace (any fighter can tell that it is no more than about four years old); a pair of crossed hand axes hung on the wall (these are rather rusted, an oversight on Curlflower's part whose job it is to see to these things); a grandfather clock with a broken spring that nobody has figured out how to fix (a dwarf or gnome PC is able to fix it on a roll of 1 on 1d6); and a stuffed monkey that Whitefriar managed to bring down with an arrow on an adventure many years ago. You should add to this list of junk as you like; most of it is useless and has curiosity value only.

One of the four antique chairs is actually a **mimic** named Dapple (AC 7; MV 3"; HD 7; hp 28; #AT 1; Dmg 3-12; SA glue; SD camouflage; AL N; MM1/70) that usually resides in the kitchen pantry where there is a stone slab missing from the floor. The mimic has made friends with the only other monster on the island, a lonely **doppleganger** named Grunthein (AC 5; MV 9"; HD 4; hp 30; #AT 1; Dmg 1-12; SA surprise on 1-4; SD immune to *sleep* and *charm* spells, saves as 10th-level fighter; AL N; MM1/29). The mimic is a native of the island and has been here for many years, escaping detection with its powers even while the mansion was being built. The doppleganger is an unusually friendly one (i.e., it avoids killing humans) that washed up unnoticed after a shipwreck two months ago. The two shape-changers found one another and became good friends; before the arrival of the guests at the mansion, the two creatures amused themselves by attempting to imitate each other! Their only goals in this adventure are to avoid detection while having some fun at the expense of those around them (see areas 8, 9, 10, 15, 24, and 36).

The mimic knows nothing about the business of anyone in the mansion. It is ambivalent about the presence of humans, seeing both the benefit of increased foodstuffs in the kitchens and the increased danger of discovery. Grunthein, however, has heard bumps and knocking noises from a bedroom upstairs. Although unaware of the nature of the noises, the creature has actually heard the struggles of Hadrian Bassman in his prison upstairs (see area 38).

While Dapple generally prefers to remain a chair when not being a stone slab (see area 9), Grunthein is encountered sporadically throughout the scenario. Dapple and Grunthein should be used in amusing ways to heighten confusion later on but not used to excess, as nervous PCs might kill them off before they can learn anything useful from them. PCs who spend a lot of time here may eventually notice that one of the chairs vanishes from time to time during the night.

4. Stairway and Landing. These stairs connect the inner hall with the upper level of the building. There is usually nothing of interest here unless the PCs should meet either Dapple the mimic or Grunthein the doppleganger here (see area 3 for their statistics).

5. The Sunken Ballroom. The upper section of the ballroom, on a level with the rest of the house, is a carpeted balcony looking down onto the dance floor. Opposite the balcony is a raised bandstand on which musicians play for the dancers below (though no musicians are present now).

The dance floor is lit by six gold, candle-filled chandeliers (actually lead with a coating of gold paint), which are lowered to the floor to be dusted and refilled daily. The dome from which they are suspended is made of many sheets of glass and gives the impression of an open canopy on a clear night.

PCs exploring the mansion may well meet Baron Whitefriar here for the first time. If so, he is looking over the balcony, seeing that everything below has been arranged to his exacting standards. If he has not already been informed of the PCs' arrival, he is certainly surprised to see them.

Baron Whitefriar: AC 10; MV 12"; F4; hp 26; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); S 14, I 16, W 12, D 13, D 15, Ch 17; AL CN.

Possessed of what were considered to be unusual ideas, Whitefriar forsook the comfortable living his father had made ready for him and went adventuring all over the world. Seeing strange and wonderful things only served to heighten Whitefriar's curiosity about the world around him. His visits to different cultures made him into a deep thinker, at least by the limited standards of Cambium. Later, on returning home a wealthy man in his own right, Whitefriar inherited the barony of Monton as well as the office of mayor from his father. Unused to the restrictions of public life, the new Baron Whitefriar became notorious for doing and saying strange things.

In all things, Whitefriar is his own man. His latest ideas about the nature of man have led him to spend thousands of gold pieces on his experiment with Ruga. He intends to see his experiment succeed but prefers the excitement of spur-of-the-moment planning, a substitute for the life of adventure he left behind. His aptitude for on-the-spot planning will be tested extensively when the PCs suddenly show up. Unruffled, Whitefriar is secretly glad to test his theory in front of independent witnesses. He welcomes the chance for his protege, Ruga, to perform in front of such an audience but attempts to find out as much as possible about the adventurers even as they conduct investigations of their own.

In choosing the guests, Whitefriar was unaware of the inclusion of the notorious thief, the Black Hand, and his accomplice. He will see the pressure placed upon his creation by a jewel theft as an intriguing additional challenge.

Whitefriar's room is upstairs next to Ruga's chamber. For details refer to area 21.

6A. Gentlemen's Restroom. This chamber is designed to relieve gentlemen from the rigors of the dance floor.

6B. Ladies' Restroom. This chamber is provided to allow ladies to powder their noses between dances. A curtained pair of french doors opens onto the colonnade to the south.

7. The Banquet Hall. This beam-ceiling hall contains a 40'-long dining table running its length. This is where a great banquet will be held the evening before the guests depart. Other than some wall-hangings showing pastoral scenes, there is nothing of interest stored in the hall between banquets. Though the wall-hangings are worth 200 gp each (there are five of them), they are too large to steal and transport with ease.

The PCs should meet Lord Brigholsom here for the first time. Brigholsom is standing with his back to the fireplace.

Lord Brigholsom: AC 10; MV 12"; F1; hp 7; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); S 14, I 13, W 11, D 11, C 14, Ch 16; AL CN.

Brigholsom is Whitefriar's friend and confidant, and though lacking the abstract concerns of his friend, he shares his interest in discussion and debate. Unfortunately, Brigholsom has seldom managed to best Whitefriar at either of these pursuits, due in part to Whitefriar's wit and expertise with the spoken word, but also to Brigholsom's rather oblique thought processes.

Brigholsom's peerage is hereditary, although his position as Mayor of Sunforst is not. He became friends with Whitefriar shortly after the latter's return to Cambium, and they have kept up their friendship over the years since then.

The bet with Whitefriar seems to Brigholsom to be a sure thing, but experience has taught him that any interference to try to swing things in his favor usually results in the opposite effect where Whitefriar is concerned. The PCs' arrival is viewed with secret glee on Brigholsom's part — the wild-card adventurers are bound to upset Whitefriar and Ruga into losing the 5,000-gp bet.

Although a quiet person, Brigholsom can be quite cordial and would be a quite likeable chap except for his narrow views on social issues. He is not well-disposed toward demi-humans, as he has never met any. Brigholsom is inclined to treat the PCs with distrust, although his suspicions remain hidden until such time as something unusual happens (such as the theft of the Southbourne Jewels), after which he voices wild accusations.

Lord Brigholsom's rooms are on the upper floor of the mansion at area 33.

8. The Kitchen.

> This area appears to be dedicated to food preparation. To the south is a large stove on which a huge kettle of boiling water is kept constantly bubbling away. To the north is a workbench beneath two small windows. A cook and two maids are at work here, bustling about with pots, pans, and trays and looking uncomfortable at the idea of strangers in their kitchen.

If the PCs investigate this area at night, the description given should exclude the staff. The cook and maids have small but adequate rooms in the attic upstairs (see area 32).

The cook is a large woman named Gertrude who wears a scrupulously clean apron over her calico dress. She resents anything she considers to be an insult to herself, her cooking abilities, or her kitchen. Gertrude refuses to gossip with the maids and has no information about any of the goings-on upstairs. She can, however, confirm the doormen's story that all the servants but Curlflower have been hired especially for the week's celebration.

Gertrude, cook: AC 10; MV 12"; zero-level human; hp 3; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; AL N; many kitchen knives available as weapons.

The two maids double as servants upstairs and so have picked up some gossip. The junior maid, Kathy Krimp, is a notorious tale-teller; most of the information she imparts is either misleading or inaccurate. One juicy rumor she has started is that Peter Curlflower is in love with the senior maid, Emer Wincescupper. Kathy, although already occupied with her own boyfriend back on the mainland, delights in spreading malicious gossip about Curlflower and Wincescupper, of whom she is a little jealous. (The rumor is untrue.)

Kathy is convinced that the house is haunted, as she has heard floorboards creaking and whispering at odd hours of the night from her room in the attic. These noises could be caused by any number of things, from the doppleganger prowling about to Peter Curlflower sneaking upstairs to feed the captive Hadrian Bassman (see area 38).

Kathy Krimp, junior maid: AC 10; MV 12"; zero-level human; hp 4; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); AL N.

The senior maid, Emer Wincescupper, has never actually seen the "new owner" of the mansion, as Gertrude keeps her too busy in the kitchen. Emer grew up in the very village from which the peasant Ruga disappeared. As Ruga is a common name in Cambium, Emer has not made the connection between the peasant and the new baron. Peter Curlflower has told Emer that she will be serving dinner to the guests on the last evening of their stay at the mansion — the day of the great banquet — so it appears certain that she will come into contact with Baron Ruga at that time. She has an 80% chance to recognize Ruga for who he is. No one is aware of her knowledge.

According to Gertrude, Emer is more than a little odd. She has lately taken to setting out cutlery and china without instructions, claiming that Gertrude

told her to do so when in fact she did not. This is the doppleganger Grunthein's little joke. When bored, he pretends to be Gertrude and issues orders in her name.

Emer knows little about the house other than those rooms she is expected to clean. She can tell the PCs which rooms belong to which guests, and also knows that the east wing upstairs is under renovation and is locked up.

Emer Wincescupper, senior maid: AC 10; MV 12"; zero-level human; hp 2; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); AL NG.

9. Food stores. This room is a pantry, a dairy, and a wine cellar all rolled into one. It is especially crowded with casks and boxes to accommodate the guests for the week, although there are enough supplies here to last for two weeks if necessary. Supplies are received by ship from the mainland, secretly for the past year (sent by the trusted steward of Whitefriar's estates), and openly for the past week in preparation for the party.

Behind one of the crates is a section of floor from which a slab is often missing. This is the area in which Dapple the mimic (see area 2) usually resides, taking the rare opportunities presented to it by the absence of the kitchen staff to pilfer a little food. So far, the creature has not been detected. Gertrude, however, has been keeping a watchful eye on Emer Wincescupper, thinking her odd behavior (see area 8) has something to do with the loss of the food.

10. Tradesmen's Entrance. This door is used by deliverymen from the mainland. As the mansion is seldom used, the fact that the door hinges were recently oiled is curious. Also, a large, freshly greased bolt locks the door from the inside. This was the door through which Grunthein the doppleganger was let in by Dapple the mimic (see area 3). The two make use of this exit to move around the island and look for small natural prey (birds, squirrels, mice, etc.) as well as have fun with the humans.

11. The Library. This room contains an extensive library of books and scrolls. Its the very place to find Gerald Moonfellow, always on the lookout for a rare or valuable tome.

Moonfellow, a well-known member of Cambium's magic-users guild, was invited to the mansion due to his high position in the community. He became wealthy and powerful through a mixture of common sense, ruthlessness, and a good deal of luck. Since becoming acquainted with the half-elven lawyer, Dorval Primperson, Moonfellow's fortunes have increased even more. Recognizing the usefulness of Moonfellow's nature and profession, Primperson (secretly the notorious Black Hand) made him his partner in crime.

Now the two have come together once more, to attempt the highlight of their careers — the theft of the Southbourne Jewels. Their plan, once the theft has been accomplished, is to each take half the necklace and swallow it, thus obviating the need to make good an escape which would certainly unmask them as the thieves they really are. How they manage to steal the necklace depends on circumstances (see area 34), but the resourceful Primperson has a few ideas.

Gerald Moonfellow is disturbed at the intrusion of a group of adventurers who might be skilled or powerful enough to recover the jewels. Therefore, he gives the impression of being a true snob, disinterested in those he considers to be his inferiors, in an attempt to discourage the PCs from having any contact with him — and constantly considers ways to escape capture.

Gerald Moonfellow: AC 8; MV 12"; MU5; hp 15; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 14, I 18, W 16, D 16, C 13, Ch 9; AL CN; dagger; current spells: *charm person, magic missile, read magic, ventriloquism, locate object, wizard lock, feign death.* Moonfellow's chamber is located at area 35. He keeps his bedroom door *wizard locked.*

The library is one of the most interesting rooms in the house, as it contains valuable and rare books imported from various foreign lands by Whitefriar in the days when he still traveled extensively. You can stock the library with whatever books and scrolls might prove useful or interesting in your campaign.

Also present, but hidden away in a mound of papers, are three scrolls containing the magic-user spells *feather fall, detect invisibility,* and *hold person.* The following clerical scrolls may be located after a thorough search: *remove fear, know alignment, locate object,* and *neutralize poison.*

One other notable fact about the library is that nowhere is there any reference to Baron Ruga's family or its history.

12. The Study.

> This room appears to be some kind of study. It has a single candelabrum hanging from the white ceiling, and one large window in the north wall. A fireplace against the west wall heats the room, and doors connect with the library (area 11) and the corridor outside. A large desk with a comfortable chair sits beneath the window. Near the fire are two reclining chairs and a chaise longue. There is no one in the room.

Over the fireplace is another recently painted portrait of one of Baron Ruga's "ancestors." The same chances for recognizing it as a fake apply here as at area 3.

The desk has four drawers, all of which are locked but not trapped (use a thief's normal *open locks* percentage). The top left drawer contains a blank note pad (unused) and some ink-stained quills. A bottle of ink stands at the very back of the drawer. It is only partially stoppered, and the PC opening this drawer must make a dexterity check on 1d20 to catch the bottle before it spills. Of course, spilling the ink will alert Whitefriar to the fact that someone has been prying.

The bottom left drawer contains some papers detailing ownership of the mansion as being in the name of one Baron Whitefriar of Monton. They are dated some 20 years ago and look very official and genuine. The drawer also contains receipts from a local painter for what is described as "restoration work" on several paintings. The customer is once again Baron Whitefriar of Monton.

On the right side of the desk, the top drawer contains some loose sheets of writing paper engraved with the letterhead of the municipality of Monton. The bottom drawer holds receipts from mainland traders for food, wine, and beer, as well as linens and other household goods. All these receipts have been signed by Peter Curlflower. In the back of the drawer is a moldy crust of bread left there by Ruga in a moment of weakness. It is difficult for him to forget that he was recently a starving peasant.

13. The Day Room. This room is where the mansion's owner entertains visitors during the day. It holds items of comfortable furniture and a locked cabinet containing decanters of wine,

brandy, sherry, whiskey, and even a small (two-gallon) keg of beer. A secret door in the west end of the south wall leads to area 14.

14. Secret Room. This room is only accessible through the secret door from the day room (area 13). It reflects a feature of Cambium architecture that provides a very private chamber in which the master of the house might entertain special guests in secret. When Whitefriar purchased the mansion years ago, this room was already a feature of the house. He has since had a window added to give more light but has left the secret door in place as a novelty.

This room is equal in all respects to the day room (area 13). However, hanging on the west wall is a painting of Whitefriar's father, the previous Baron Whitefriar, which bears a close resemblance to the current baron.

15. The Morning Room. This is where Baron Ruga eats his breakfast in the morning. It is seldom used for anything else and never for entertaining guests. Nevertheless, this is the room to which Peter Curlflower escorts the adventurers when they first arrive.

> A fire glows in the fireplace, apparently just on the point of going out. A single table and chair of polished mahogany are the room's only furnishings. A cart to one side of the table holds an assortment of fine china dishes and the remains of a meal. There are some pictures on the walls, similar in style and subject matter to those in the inner hall.

The first time the PCs enter this area is a good time to introduce them to one of the island's shape-changing monsters. While the PCs are waiting, a rather decrepit old man with a cane comes into the room. He looks startled to see the room is occupied but recovers enough to introduce himself as General Godwald Rolfveld. In reality, however, this general is Grunthein the doppleganger, who has taken on the appearance of the real general in order to look for a midnight snack. Any subsequent meeting with the real general (see area 16) will lead to confusion as Rolfveld denies all knowledge of ever having met the PCs before — though no one may believe it.

Shortly after walking in on the PCs, Grunthein makes some excuse to leave, apparently off to bed (he actually heads for area 36).

A few minutes later, Peter Curlflower returns with the master of the house, the distinguished Baron Ruga.

Ruga: AC 6; MV 12"; F1; hp 10; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); S 18/15, I 14, W 11, D 18, C 17, Ch 18; AL NG. As part of his education, Ruga was given combat training by Curlflower, and he can now progress normally as a fighter in experience.

Ruga is a tall, well-built, and well-groomed man with a rather imposing personality. Upon hearing of the plight of the adventurers, he immediately instructs Peter Curlflower to have rooms, warm drinks, and dry clothes made ready for them upstairs. He then yawns loudly and retires to bed, promising to be more available in the morning when the PCs can meet some of the other guests. When Ruga leaves, Curlflower should impart information to the PCs about the planned party so that they know what is supposed to be going on in the mansion.

Although Ruga was initially reluctant to go along with the plan, the incentive of receiving half the 5,000-gp bet should Whitefriar win was enough to make him change his mind. He has been Peter Curlflower's willing student on the island for the past year.

Ruga has managed to adapt to a lifestyle of luxury with an ease which only one who has known poverty all his life can achieve. Although he does not fully comprehend the nature of Whitefriar's plans, he has every intention of doing his best to help them come to fruition. However, the presence of Lord Brigholsom, Whitefriar's opponent in the experiment, has made Ruga a trifle nervous. In his heart, he cannot believe that Brigholsom will not try to sabotage the proceedings in some way to avoid losing the bet — perhaps even by stealing the necklace or hiring the PCs to crash the party.

Ruga and Curlflower have now grown to be good friends and companions. Ruga will try his best to remain aloof from the PCs, however, fearing that they are Brigholsom's minions.

Ruga has been taught to play his part well. It is ironic, however, that in choosing a "typical" peasant, Whitefriar picked Ruga, with his extraordinary strength, dexterity, and charisma. But

the so-called baron doesn't have the confidence to adapt that Whitefriar would have in such a situation. He wants only to get the job done and collect his money; he has no intention of either continuing with his role as baron or returning to his former lifestyle (see area 1 for his future plans).

Ruga's cover story is that he is the only son of a baron from a far-off land. He inherited the barony on the death of his father and set about improving conditions there. With these improvements made (he tends to gloss over this part of his story), he took his fortune and retired early, selling all his lands to a wealthy merchant who has since taken over the ruling of that part of the country. Because his title was hereditary and held independently of the land, Ruga was permitted to retain his title of baron. He now wishes to use his skills in Cambium State — investments in suitable businesses being his chief interest. The purchase of this island estate was merely to establish a base of operations. Of course, the entire story is false, but Ruga has so far managed to convince all of his guests of his authenticity (no one has reason to doubt him).

Ruga sleeps in the master bedroom

(area 19), vacated for the duration by Whitefriar.

16. The Recreation Room. This area is used for purely recreational purposes. It contains two billiards tables (PCs may well be puzzled as to how one swings or throws a snooker cue correctly), a card table, dart boards, and other upper-class amusements.

Usually found in this room is General Godwald Rolfveld, one of the baron's guests who is partial to the game of billiards. The general had a dubious army career and was retired well past the usual age with the honorary rank of general. Rolfveld is given to interrupting conversations (especially at the dinner table) with outbursts of reminiscing about the days he saw action, albeit from a safe distance, in one or another of a number of wars.

The owner of an ailing estate on the mainland, Rolfveld prefers drinking brandy to paying his bills. Not surprisingly, he is now hopelessly in debt, a situation not unlike that of Lady Laura Livingstone but without much hope of marrying into a fortune.

When he heard about the arrival of the baron, Rolfveld pulled strings to secure an invitation to the party, hoping to capitalize on the baron's reputation for investment. In conversation with Baron Ruga, the general invariably brings up financial matters, even openly asking for "a small loan to tide me over." Ruga, of course, always tries to change the subject, taking advantage of the presence of any PCs to distract the general and make good his escape.

The PCs may well notice that Rolfveld is suffering from the primary stages of senility and may put this down as the reason for his forgetting their earlier meeting in the morning room (see area 15). He serves as an amusing distraction rather than a crucial element in the plot. Like Brigholsom, he is rather limited in his preferences for humankind. Unlike Brigholsom, though, he is more vocal in his racism. The general's obsession with money matters makes him a potential suspect in the investigation following the theft of the jewels.

General Godwald Rolfveld: AC 10; MV 6" from age; F5; hp 22; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 10, I 9, W 7, D 10, C 9, Ch 12; AL LN; long sword. His room is at area 25.

17. Private Smoking Room.

> This room is comfortably endowed with easy chairs and plenty of wood panelling, making it a pleasant place to sit and have a smoke. In fact, the heavy smell in the air would seem to indicate this to be true.

Except for the crackling fire and box of cigars, this room is a mundane sort of place with not much to interest adventurers. It is just the kind of place, however, one would expect to find the dwarf Saldv Frugglehoffer, partaking of a pipeful of tobacco at Baron Ruga's expense.

Frugglehoffer was introduced to the true meaning of life — money — at an early age. Sharing the common dwarven interest in gold, Frugglehoffer quickly built a wealthy and powerful conglomerate of smithy works, armories, and foundries.

One thing became apparent to Frugglehoffer early on: The well-to-do of Cambium were neither broad-minded nor liberated in their image of the ideal businessperson. Their complacent and ill-informed prejudices toward those of demi-human stock, however, were more tolerable than those that were directed at the female of any species working in business.

Frugglehoffer had little difficulty in disguising her gender from her human business partners. To date, none of them has discovered the truth, a fact which the dwarf neither worries about nor derives pleasure from. The main characteristic of this dedicated businessperson is her utter disregard for consequences in the face of her unquenchable ambition for wealth. Her constant search for greater riches is tainted by her profoundly amoral nature. A tale told in confidence to Frugglehoffer is unerringly exploited to the profit of the dwarf.

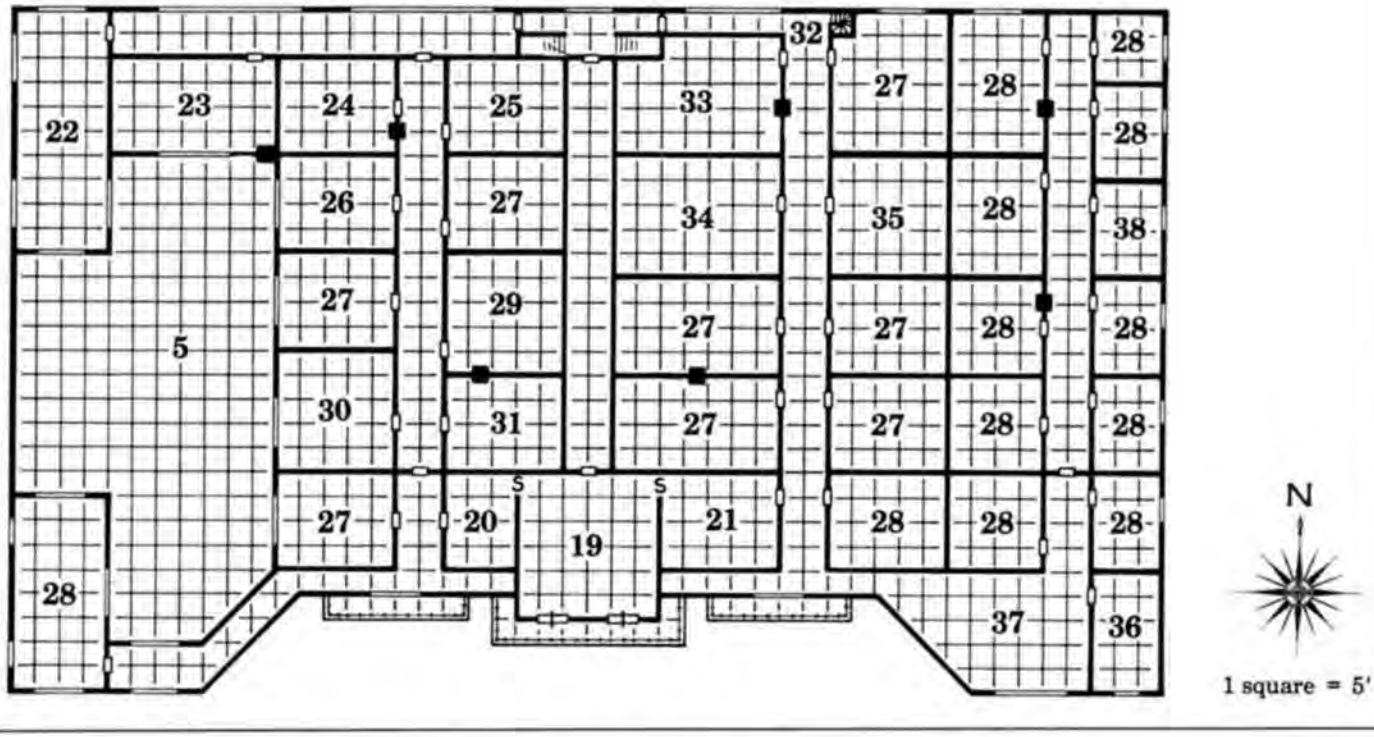
At Baron Ruga's mansion, Frugglehoffer may well seem to be acting suspiciously as she searches for documents which might prove useful in the business world. Naturally, the dwarf also shows an inordinate curiosity about the Southbourne Jewels, a fact which should not go unnoticed by the PCs and which might add Frugglehoffer to the list of suspects in the investigation.

Frugglehoffer is by turns grouchy and unapproachable, changing suddenly to friendliness when the subject of money is brought up. There is little chance for any but another dwarf to realize that she is indeed female. A dwarf has a 99% chance of knowing at first sight that Frugglehoffer is female, and this may or may not create problems, depending on how the PCs react to this knowledge in the company of the other guests. If another dwarf appears, Frugglehoffer will quietly attempt to take the dwarf aside and briefly explain the charade, asking for the dwarf's cooperation. Frugglehoffer is not currently seeking a male partner, finding that business takes all of her time.

Saldv Frugglehoffer: AC 10; F1; hp 7; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); S 15, I 14, W 12, D 10, C 15, Ch 11 (13 to dwarves); AL N. Frugglehoffer's room is described at area 29.

18. Gentlemen's Smoking Room. This special smoking room is used when guests are attending a function in the ballroom or banquet hall. It is more finely designed than the baron's private smoking room (area 17) and contains several pieces of antique furniture, a continually lit fireplace, and a card table for those not enamored with the idea of traveling across the building to the recreation room (area 16). In general, it is the practice to exclude ladies from this room — the chauvinistic males

THE MANSION Second Floor



of Cambium State wish to talk without having them present, which may cause problems for any female adventurers.

One item of interest in the room is a solid silver cigar case worth about 60 gp and filled with expensive imported cigars. The host also keeps a good supply of tobacco and even some unused pipes for gentlemen who may have neglected to bring their own.

Second Floor

19. Master Bedroom. This is the most important room on the upper level though perhaps not the most pleasant, for despite its size and southern exposure, the master bedroom is amazingly cold. Two french doors to the south open onto a balcony from which there is an excellent view of the roadway, the harbor, and the sea beyond.

The bed is a fine four-poster, well covered with warm blankets and a quilt. A porcelain bathtub, a towel rack, two great wardrobes, and a trunk complete the furnishings. The wardrobes, which contain many items of fine clothing, stand against the west and east walls just inside the entrance. The floor is covered with a huge carpet of foreign design.

The PCs may be interested to discover that the towels are all embroidered with the letter W, the wardrobes' backs are actually secret doors (opening into areas 20 and 21), and the clothes are all quite new — some seem to have never been worn.

While the carpet is worth about 1,000 gp and is another of Whitefriar's acquisitions from his adventuring days, there appears to be a distinct lack of valuables here. If asked, Ruga explains that most of his personal belongings are in transit from his old home.

See area 15 for Ruga's statistics.

20. Peter Curlflower's Room.

This is a rather small room in comparison to some of the others in this section of the house. It is scrupulously clean, however, and seems to get special care in addition to that performed by the maid in the course of her normal duties. A modest but comfortable bed fills the southeast corner of the room. Hanging on the wall at the head of the bed is a long sword in a brightly decorated scabbard. Numerous other small pieces of weaponry also hang on the walls about the room.

A large wardrobe against the east wall in the northeast corner contains spotlessly clean clothes of the kind Peter Curlflower is usually seen to wear.

As his position as manservant to Whitefriar and tutor to Ruga necessitated his constant availability on short notice, Peter Curlflower (see area 1 for statistics) was installed here. This location has served him well, giving him swift access to the master of the house through the secret door. The room is so clean because Curlflower cleans it himself in addition to the maid's daily visit.

Under the bed is a locked trunk containing a travel-worn cloak and a belt with a frayed scabbard, the original scabbard of the sword hanging on the wall. In a false bottom of the chest are Curlflower's savings, amounting to 2,500 gp in various foreign and domestic coins.

The sword hanging on the wall is Curlflower's magical long sword, Grimscian (*long sword +2, +3 vs. thieves and assassins*). It is magically protected so that only Curlflower may take it from its scabbard. All others attempting to do so find it impossible to unsheath. Curlflower has kept the weapon as a reminder of his days of adventure with Whitefriar. The other weapons hanging on the walls are also trophies of one type or another. They are all non-magical and include a long bow, a quiver of 24 arrows (four of which are silvered), a pair of matched battle axes, and a shield.

The wardrobe conceals the secret door to the master bedroom (area 19). Hanging in the very back of the wardrobe is another of Peter Curlflower's prized possessions, his suit of *chain mail +1*.

21. Whitefriar's Room.

This room has a deep-pile carpet, a wardrobe, and a bed. Washing facilities occupy the southwest corner. The carpet, though luxurious by any standards, has seen better days. There is a fair amount of clutter in here, and it would seem that the room hasn't been cleaned or dusted for quite some time.

To maintain his credibility in the charade, Whitefriar has moved out of the master bedroom (area 19) and into this smaller room. Much of the clutter is boxes and packages of papers, all of which have been moved here in haste from the master bedroom via the secret door in the wardrobe. Observant PCs might notice the slightly worn path in the carpet.

Most of the papers are official documents which need Whitefriar's attention. They are tedious and deal mostly with taxes, crop yields, tariffs on goods, and reports from his steward. You can provide a comprehensive list of this material as needed; it is merely a time waster for the adventurers.

On the bedside table are a stack of note paper and some books, mostly light reading material. However, Whitefriar used the missing top sheet of note paper to write a letter to a friend on the mainland about the progress of his social experiment. Rubbing charcoal or ashes on the next sheet of paper reveals a few lines of the letter:

. . . but as things stand now, Maurice, it seems that I shall be several thousand gold pieces richer by the end of the week. Think of it! All that money at the expense of the fools invited to this party. With any luck, they shall never know that I have had any involvement in the matter.

Your friend,
Whitefriar

This may throw the cat among the pigeons as far as the PCs are concerned! The letter is open to various interpretations, even though it refers merely to the fact that Whitefriar is confident of winning his bet over Ruga and not to any connection with the jewel theft.

Under the bed is a trunk in which some odd pieces of very old and worn clothing are stored. They are anything but the type of clothing usually worn by Whitefriar, and are those worn by him in his old adventuring days. One of these pieces is a black leather jerkin, which might make the PCs wrongly suspect that Whitefriar is some kind of a thief.

The dust in the room is due to Whitefriar's having forbidden the maids to enter his chamber unbidden. He fears that if the boxes of papers are disturbed, he will never be able to sort them out again!

For Baron Whitefriar's statistics, see area 5.

22. The West Room: Gorden and Lilly Gromweaver.

This room is larger and more elegant than most of those seen elsewhere in the mansion. A pair of windows looks out onto the ballroom (area 5), while two others look west toward the setting sun. The chamber is divided by screens into a small sitting room, a bedroom with a double bed, and a bathing area. In many respects, the apartment is like a self-contained house without, of course, a kitchen.

These apartments are those currently being used by Gorden and Lilly Gromweaver. Gorden has been invited on the strength of his great wealth — a wealth amassed from his dealings with the families of dead men. Gorden is an undertaker — in fact, the richest undertaker in Cambium. Now reaching middle age, he is seeking a way to expand his business. It has always been his ambition to own a country-wide funeral service. The main obstacle, as always, is money. While Gromweaver may be rich, he needs more capital to finance his dreams; he has grovelled his way into a position of relative comfort but has no great store of cash to draw upon. He feels his fortunes are soon to change with his invitation to Baron Ruga's party. Perhaps he can manage to interest the baron, who he has heard is always interested in new investments, in financing his expansion.

Fired with this idea, Gromweaver can barely restrain himself from discussing the matter with Ruga at each and every opportunity. His main opponent to this scheme, however, is his wife and business partner, Lilly Gromweaver. Lilly shares neither Gorden's boundless enthusiasm for his own plans nor his liking for his profession. She wed the undertaker when she was only 17 years old, and in the three years since their marriage of convenience she has never been able to appreciate the fine art of undertaking, despite being made a full partner in the business by her husband.

There has never been a time at which Lilly could say that she had got used to Gorden's wheeling-and-dealing, a trait she finds anything but attractive. Craving the excitement and challenge currently lacking in her life, Lilly will find herself attracted to one or more of the adventurous PCs and is especially interested in any heroic tales they might have to tell.

Lilly argues constantly with Gorden, but never in public. Gorden regularly tries to reassure her with his "things will get better soon" speech, which though lost on her may prove an interesting diversion to any investigating PCs who overhear this outburst and wrongly connect it to the jewel theft.

Gorden Gromweaver: AC 10; MV 12"; zero-level human; hp 4; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); AL NG.

Lilly Gromweaver: AC 10; MV 12"; zero-level human; hp 2; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); AL NG.

23. Marita Southbourne's Room.

This room has recently been redecorated in pink and yellow shades of paint. It is lavished with furs and rugs of every conceivable (expensive) description. A fireplace adds to the effect.

This is the room given to the owner of the Southbourne Jewels, the richest woman in Cambium, Marita Southbourne. Marita was willed a diamond mine by her late husband, Gregor, making her the richest and most influential individual in the country. Since the loss of her husband, she has dedicated herself to "getting over the grief" (as she puts it) with a gusto and dedication which is astonishing.

Wearing no jewelry but gold or diamonds, Mrs. Southbourne indulges in no other pleasures but the clothes she orders, all designed to flatter her rather outsized figure. Parties, though boring and passè, are a necessary evil, a sacrifice which she imposes on herself at every available opportunity. Suitors have proven their affections to be no more than financially motivated, so Mrs. Southbourne has grown to distrust all strangers, choosing the comfort of old friends instead. Dorval Primperson is one of her circle of old friends and is assured of Marita Southbourne's attention. She has no idea, of course, that the lawyer is secretly a notorious jewel thief, and she has told him one secret too many.

The most stunning piece of jewelry worn by Marita Southbourne is a gold necklace set with the fabulous Southbourne Jewels, a gift of fine diamonds given to her as a wedding present by her husband. A conservative estimate recently placed a value of 75,000 gp on the diamonds, a sum which Mrs. Southbourne has doubled for insurance purposes.

Marita appears unconcerned when it comes to the jewels, saying only that she has no worries about loss or theft as "the insurance will cover it." Despite her apparent self-assurance, she keeps a paste copy of the necklace as a security measure — a clever fake which any individual accustomed to valuing jewelry will spot if allowed more than a cursory glance at the necklace. The real necklace, worn only on very special occasions such as Baron Ruga's great banquet, is hidden in a jewelry case in the bottom of a trunk in her room; on other occasions, the paste fake will do. Dorval, of course, knows the difference between the fake and real necklaces — and, thanks to Marita's trusting nature, knows where the real one is.

Of course, if the real necklace does disappear, Marita Southbourne will be genuinely upset, blaming strangers (such as the PCs) over people she already knows. Hysterics would be appropriate in such a case.

Marita Southbourne: AC 10; MV 12"; zero-level human; hp 4; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); AL LN.

24. Mary-Ellen Gooderingson's Room.

> This room is painted a nice reddish color which reflects the warmth of the fireplace. It is less well-appointed than many of the other rooms in the mansion, though it is quite comfortable. The furnishings include three comfortable chairs facing the fire, a screen for privacy, a single bed, and a wardrobe.

This is the chamber given over to Mary-Ellen Gooderingson. She is one of two sisters, 18-year old twins. The fact that she is a troublemaker is compounded by the same tendency in her identical twin (see Ellen-Mary Gooderingson, area 31).

The sisters are daughters of Judge Gooderingson, a famous justice of the peace on the mainland. To gain a little of this peace for himself, he secured invitations to the party for his daughters, in the vague hope that Baron Ruga would fall in love with one or the other of them and take her off his hands.

As does young Mrs. Gromweaver (see area 22), the Gooderingson sisters live a restless life among the unnecessary conventions and etiquette of their social position. Unlike the undertaker's wife, however, the Gooderingson sisters are not too polite to rebel in public.

The twins have been the orchestrators of several memorable disasters at parties in the past, a fact which is widely known but for which any concrete proof is lacking. Items have gone missing and have turned up again in odd or embarrassing places. On one occasion, a pig's head was taken from the kitchens and turned up in the trophy room of a certain famous hunter — just as he was showing some influential guests his collection. When the jewels are stolen, the sisters may well be high on the list of suspects in the opinions of the other guests.

There is no reason why the PCs should learn immediately that there are two sisters. Let them find out for themselves. It should lead to some fun and confusion, especially if, with the addition of Grunthein the doppleganger, the twins suddenly become triplets.

The twins should be played as practical jokers rather than with any malicious intent. Naturally, they look sweet and innocent at all times.

Mary-Ellen Gooderingson: AC 10; MV 12"; zero-level human; hp 4; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); AL CN.

25. General Rolfveld's Room.

> This room is equipped with the usual items of furniture, but it has had its carpet removed and an extra lock fitted to the door. The bed mattress has been taken off and placed on the bare floorboards. Sticking out from under the bed is a sword which looks more like a piece of junk than a weapon. On the table next to the bed is a single full-faced helmet.

The general, on one of his past campaigns, discovered that the carpet on which his bed had been placed was a haven for bugs and other undesirable creatures. Since then, he has taken it into his head that lack of a suitable hiding place (the carpet) will lead to a suitable lack of things looking to hide, hence the carpet being rolled back. As for the mattress — well, Rolfveld never got used to sleeping in a proper bed after his army career and so sleeps on the floor.

Fearful of a night attack by "the enemy," General Rolfveld has his trusty sword to hand. The sword is notched, and the tip of its blade has fallen off. The general's war helmet no longer fits him. Should the adventurers or anyone else rush in during the night (bypassing the extra lock on the door), the general reaches for his sword, dons his helmet, and discovers that it has slipped down over his eyes making it impossible to see. Of course, the general's view of these events may well be colored by his addled state of mind ("Help! The orcs have blinded me! Someone get their shaman!").

See area 16 for more information on General Godwald Rolfveld.

26. Ismarellda Gwinervan's Room.

> The only furniture in this room is a simple bed, a single hard chair, and a writing desk. A neutral-good holy symbol hangs on the south wall.

This room has been give to the abbess of the monastery of Ckel. The chamber is unadorned, functional, and bears no trappings of wealth. Gwinervan travels very lightly. She carries far less luggage than most clerics of her level might be expected to when on excursions. This is due to common sense, and because she doesn't believe in giving a show of wealth and affluence wherever she goes.

Ismarellda was a quiet, thoughtful girl with good prospects for marriage when she forsook her well-to-do life for that of a cleric. Her vocation and her selection of the obscure monastery of Ckel raised quite a few eyebrows at the time. Over the years, however, her faith and dedication have caused her to rise in the hierarchy to the point where she now controls not only Ckel but the monasteries and policies of the order in the entire region. You may choose whichever god or goddess in your campaign is suitable for Gwinervan to follow.

Since becoming abbess, Gwinervan has established herself as something of an expert at extracting donations from wealthy patrons. Apart from this talent, she is also valued for her opinions on topics ranging from politics to history. The abbess has been invited to the gathering with one purpose in mind; of all the guests, she is the least likely to be fooled by the charade, a fact which Brigholsom knew well when he insisted she be invited.

Because of Gwinervan's shrewd mind and quick reactions, you may find this character useful in dropping hints to the PCs if they run into any major difficulty in the course of the adventure. If necessary, assume she has guessed what Whitefriar is up to but won't tell anyone directly. She has her own suspicions about the thief, which she does not voice because she is not completely sure. Due to the Black Hand's magical protection (see area 34), Gwinervan is unable to detect his whereabouts or Primperson's alignment, a situation which fuels her suspicions of him.

Ostensibly, Abbess Ismarellda Gwinervan was invited to the party as a courtesy, to facilitate her constant search for funds to maintain her monasteries. Should Ruga refuse a donation to the cause (which of course he will do, being a destitute peasant), Gwinervan won't push. She has other means of getting donations, perhaps even from the PCs.

Ismarellda Gwinervan: AC 8; MV 12"; C6; hp 28; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 15, I 15, W 16, D 16, C 17, Ch 16; AL NG; *ring of fire resistance;* current spells: *bless, cure light wounds, detect evil, detect magic, remove fear, augury, detect charm, know alignment, silence 15' radius, slow poison, create food and water, prayer.* The abbess's prayer beads, which she hangs on the bed post upon retiring, are made from solid gold and are worth 300 gp.

27. Adventurers' Rooms. Each of these rooms is allocated to one of the "special guests," the members of the PCs' group. The extra rooms are unused. Be sure to note which character is in which room and keep track of whatever comings and goings are in progress among the other rooms.

28. Empty Rooms. These rooms are under repair. All these rooms past the locked door north of area 37 are filled with dust, odd tools, the occasional stepladder, etc.

29. Saldv Frugglehoffer's Room.

This room is painted in earth colors, and there is something odd about the proportions of the furniture. Apart from these few differences, the rest of the room appears to be no stranger than any of the others visited.

This room is the one given to the dwarven merchant, Saldv Frugglehoffer (see area 17). In most respects it is normal, but the furniture is dwarf-size. The decor is designed to accommodate dwarven tastes, though it might seem dull to others.

The small four-poster bed looks innocent enough, but lying on top of the canopy is a small, flat box virtually invisible from the floor unless someone specifically searches above the bed. Inside the box are a number of strange oddments. A tiny vial contains a potion of *extra healing.* Next to this is a ribbon-tied scroll, "The Last Will and Testament of Saldv Frugglehoffer," in which the whole estate of the dwarf is left to a pet rat named Beauregard. Also in the box are a magical ring which bestows *invisibility* on the wearer and a small notebook containing the names of all the invited guests, their professions, and the dwarf's opinion of their financial health (the most incriminating item). In this book, Marita Southbourne is listed as "an interesting challenge."

These notes were taken by Frugglehoffer while planning how best to use her talent of finding out pertinent details about business matters. They have nothing whatsoever to do with the theft of the jewels.

With the exception of some feminine undergarments that may seem out of place in the room of a dwarven businessman, there is nothing revealing in the room.

30. Lady Livingstone's Room.

This chamber is painted in scarlet hues. It is furnished in much the same way as the other rooms on this floor, with the addition of a window overlooking the ballroom. The most surprising thing in the room is the huge pile of luggage heaped in the center of the floor. There are four large trunks, six smaller ones, and a single silk bag on top. The combined

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pile of luggage takes up a considerable amount of space, giving the impression of a small island in a sea of red.

Although possessed of great beauty in her youth, Lady Laura resisted her parents' persistent arrangements of marriage until finally they had to give up. In the following few decades, in which she inherited the family home and fortune, she lived a life of high-living and flagrant expenditure. Now she is flat broke and has begun to reconsider the advantages of marrying a rich man. With a husband's financial backing, Lady Livingstone can pay the numerous bills which have threatened her ownership of the family mansion.

Unfortunately, she has lately felt the creeping fear that her marriage plans are a little late. The prime requisite, a rich suitor, has thus far failed to materialize. Understandably, Lady Laura has taken the only course left open to her — she has gone on the offensive. If a husband won't come to her, she'll just have to go out and grab one herself.

The four large trunks in her room contain clothes trimmed with sequins and "sparkly bits." The small silk bag on top contains a hairbrush and tweezers. The six smaller pieces are filled with cosmetics, perfumes, and herbs. A powerful and lingering odor clings for 1-4 hours to anyone who opens these cases.

Found among the cosmetics are bleaches, powders of various colors ranging from bright green to deepest red, and a single pouch containing a white powder. Stitched onto this bag are the words "Use Sparingly." The powder is a face whitener which includes arsenic as an ingredient. Applied all at once, it can kill if the victim fails a saving throw vs. poison at +2 (assassin characters can recognize the smell of the powder). If the powder is spilled into someone's drink, it will have the same effect. It is one of a range of products bought by a gullible old lady trying to make herself young again.

Beside the bed is a strange implement. It looks like an 8"-diameter wooden ball resting on top of a spike set into a wooden base. It is actually a wig stand, used at night to hold Lady Laura's artificial hair in the correct shape. What the PCs make of this object in its bald state remains to be seen.

Lady Laura expresses an inordinate interest in any male PC at the gathering who appears to be wealthy. She has nothing good to say about Marita Southbourne and repeats Marita's remark about her necklace ("the insurance will pay for it") to the PCs.

Lady Laura Livingstone: AC 10; MV 12"; zero-level human; hp 3; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); AL CG.

31. Ellen-Mary Gooderingson's Room.

This room is decorated in a very subtle blue, marred somewhat by dust carried from the fireplace against the north wall. The single bed is a simple one, but it looks fairly comfortable all the same. The furnishings include a bedside table on which a lantern sits, a chaise longue in front of the fireplace, and a wardrobe.

This is where the hosts have placed Ellen-Mary Gooderingson, in the hope that separating the twin sisters might prevent any mischief on their part.

The PCs, on meeting Ellen-Mary for the first time, might be surprised to find she can be in two places at the same time, especially if they have just met her sister in area 24.

The dust from the fireplace has indeed been destructive of the room's color scheme. Ellen-Mary has brushed quite a bit of soot down from the chimney and placed the fine black powder in a large open bag just inside the wardrobe (which is otherwise empty; her clothes are in her sister's room) as a booby trap for anyone searching through her room. Anyone opening the door to the wardrobe is engulfed in a cloud of soot, a nasty trick that does even more damage to the room's once-beautiful decor.

Anyone opening the lantern on the bedside table finds within a ring which Ellen-Mary placed there for safekeeping. It is a gold band on which a diamond has been set and is worth 1,000 gp. Mary-Ellen has a similar ring at home but preferred not to bring it with her on this particular trip.

Ellen-Mary Gooderingson: AC 10; MV 12"; zero-level human; hp 5; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); AL CN. For more details on the Gooderingson sisters, refer to area 24.

32. Attic. This staircase leads up to the attic in which the staff (all but Peter Curlflower) have their living quarters. It creaks mightily if two or more people step on it, a fact which might prove to be amusing if the PCs are trying to ambush Gertrude, Emer, and the others on their way up to bed.

The staff's rooms are not detailed on the map. The maids, Emer and Kathy, share a single room 10' square. It is drafty and often cold. Apart from a few personal possessions, there is nothing of value in their room. Gertrude the cook has the luxury of a similar room, every bit as uncomfortable and no more informative. The doormen, Sid and Fred, share a room similar to that of Kathy and Emer.

Information on Sid and Fred can be found at areas 1 and 2. See area 8 for Emer, Kathy, and Gertrude.

33. Lord Brigholsom's Room.

This room looks to be quite comfortable. A fireplace glows cheerfully against the east wall, and an elegant but sturdy four-poster bed is located quite near the hearth. The rest of the furniture consists of a small dining

table surrounded by four chairs. The bedroom wardrobe is open, revealing a packed interior.

The wardrobe contains several suits of clothing, all belonging to Brigholsom. There is nothing else of interest here.

The dining table seems out of place in a bedroom. It is where Brigholsom, Whitefriar, Ruga, and Curlflower meet to discuss the progress of the experiment each night. As honorable men and old friends, Whitefriar and Brigholsom get as much satisfaction from comparing notes on Ruga's impersonation as either would upon winning the bet. The PCs may learn of these late-night meetings from guests residing in rooms to the east or south, or through an investigation of voices in the night.

It is up to you to decide what the adventurers might hear. They should hear certain phrases however, the sort of things which might lead them to the conclusion that something odd is going on: "I don't think things are going as smoothly as planned, old chap," or, "I'm not sure I still want to go through with the original plan. . . ." are some juicy ones. Don't, however, give away too much.

Under the bed is a trunk in which Brigholsom keeps a smaller, locked box containing his chain of office. He is the only one with a key, and the lock is intricate enough to reduce a thief's *open locks* percentage by 10%. Breaking the lock will cause no end of bother to the adventurers when Brigholsom becomes annoyed at the invasion of his privacy.

Lord Brigholsom's statistics are given at area 7.

34. Dorval Primperson's Room.

This room is painted pink. The bed is covered with velvet and the room is filled with cushions.

The furnishings seem to offer no clues, but under a particularly comfortable pile of cushions is a small bag containing some thieves tools and a small vial of liquid (this vial is empty if the theft has already taken place).

A heap of law books near the bed identifies this as the room of the half-elven lawyer, Dorval Primperson. There are 20 large volumes, one of which has had its center cut out to hold a bottle of brandy. Hidden in one of the cushions is a gemcutter's lens, the type that is held in the eye socket. The flamboyant clothes in the closet are unmistakably Primperson's.

As previously mentioned, Primperson leads a double life. By day he is a famous lawyer; by night he is the infamous jewel-thief, the Black Hand. In all respects, Primperson appears to be nothing but an eccentric dandy, bored with the pleasures afforded by his position of wealth. He dresses in the most outlandish clothes — colorful items which would be better to have never been made — when not in court.

As a lawyer, he can pick and choose whom he wishes to represent, an apparent reflection of his success. Often, though, Primperson declines a case because he is planning a theft which requires his full attention.

The Southbourne Jewels have become the target of the Black Hand and his accomplice, Gerald Moonfellow, by an extraordinary coincidence. Having at first refused an invitation to attend the gathering, Primperson later discovered that Marita Southbourne had also been invited. He immediately scrambled to reverse his decision not to attend and began planning how best to make his escape from the island with both the jewels and his identity intact. Because of other thefts and business concerns, this will be his only chance to steal the necklace for many weeks.

Primperson's plan seems simple enough. Dorval and Gerald will each take half the necklace and swallow it. Each man will then drink a small vial of liquid that magically slows down his digestive system, leaving each half of the necklace in the stomach (as well as any food later eaten). As long as they can bluff their way through the period following the discovery of the theft, they hope to simply walk off the island at the end of the week with their prizes.

The liquid that slows down their digestive systems has other effects, too. No food will be digested for 48 hours after drinking the liquid, so the men will be unable to eat very much without becoming too bloated. They can each drink water or other liquids, however, so they may appear to become very thirsty but will curiously eat almost nothing at the grand banquet on the night before boarding the ship back to the mainland.

The details of the theft are to be worked out as they go along. Primperson's initial explorations made him think it would be easy to simply cover himself with his *dust of disappearance*, climb up to Southbourne's room (area 23) from the ballroom, and steal the necklace. Now, though, he is not so sure and wishes to save the *dust* as a safeguard against capture. His main concern is not to blow his cover, although a bit of danger will not stop him from making an attempt on the necklace. To try to protect his double identity, he has also managed to procure an *amulet of proof against detection and location.*

Primperson has an alternative plan which includes climbing down the chimney into Marita Southbourne's room. This plan is dangerous but may be used if he feels that the PCs are watching other approaches. Moonfellow's spells may be used as a distraction in this event.

When the necklace is stolen and divided, all the thieves have to do is sit tight. This is sure to cause problems for investigating PCs who will have difficulty finding the necklace if it is *inside* several suspects. There are a number of ways around this problem. If things are going particularly well for the thieves, you could cause one or the other of them to die of "indigestion." If Moonfellow keels over suddenly, it will appear by the way he is clutching his stomach that he has been poisoned. The PCs may then turn their attentions to Marita Southbourne's white powder. If, however, Primperson gets to Moonfellow's body in private, he is desperate enough to cut the jewels out of the dead man, prompting the adventurers to think that there is a maniac loose in the house!

If Primperson has had to recover the jewels from his unfortunate colleague, the knife that did the job is hidden beneath a loose floorboard in the room. The PCs have the same chance of finding this as for detecting a secret door. Primperson claims the knife was planted in his room, and a *detect lie* spell shows nothing due to his magical protection (as happens with a *know alignment* spell). It therefore may be possible to trick the PCs into thinking that Primperson is telling the truth.

Dorval Primperson: AC 7; MV 12"; T5; hp 24; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SA backstab for triple damage; S 14, I 17, W 16, D 17, C 14, Ch 17; PP 65%, OL 52%, FT 40%, MS 45%, HS 41%, HN 20%, CW 90%, RL 25%; AL NE; dagger,

(continued on page 64)

MASTER OF PUPPETS

BY CARL SARGENT

The best allies are those you build yourself.

Artwork by Janet Aulisio

Carl Sargent is a professional writer who lives in Great Britain. During the summer, he spends the daylight hours utterly absorbed in the British national game — cricket. Carl is also a fan of pulp detective fiction, Russian literature, mid-1950s Frank Sinatra, the Velvet Underground, and Bulgarian choral music. This is his second appearance in DUNGEON® Adventures.

"Master of Puppets" is a short AD&D® module for 5-7 player characters of 6th-8th level. A balanced party of adventurers with at least one thief, cleric, and magic-user is needed to undertake this adventure. Evil PCs should be avoided.

The monk class used in this module is taken from the *Players Handbook* (pages 30-32), not *Oriental Adventures.* Refer to the description of that class for more information on the powers the monks herein possess, particularly the following: bonuses to damage when using weapons, ability to stun or slay opponents with open-hand attacks, special saving throws against non-magical missiles, special saving throws to reduce or negate damage from attacks, reduced chances to be surprised, thieving abilities, ability to fall without harm, and special abilities A-K granted by level.

Adventure Background

In a medium-size town of the DM's chosing, the PCs are approached by a young man who introduces himself as Dalziel, personal clerk to Aarhius the monk, who is interested in commissioning the PCs to recover a stolen book. If a spell such as *ESP* or *know alignment* is surreptitiously used, it shows that Dalziel is of lawful-good alignment, that he is being honest, and that he hopes the PCs will agree to the mission. He has no idea what the stolen book contains. If the PCs agree to meet Aarhius, Dalziel suggests a supper-time meeting in a private room at an excellent local hostel.

Dalziel attends this feast with his master, who is a thin, tall, silver-haired man, 77 years old. Aarhius is a good host and certainly no fool. He introduces himself as the master of a distant community of monks and mentions he has traveled far to recover a stolen book, but defers detailed discussion until the dinner ends. At a signal from the aged monk, Dalziel withdraws, and Aarhius gets down to business.

"The book of which I shall speak was stolen from the sealed library of my order by one of our own number, two years ago. Only now have I been able to locate him. He is named Qhyjanoth, and I should tell you now that, while he is a powerful monk, he recently turned to the arcane arts of magic, making him a doubly dangerous enemy. I have traced him to a lair below the ruins of a long-abandoned wayside shrine, one day's ride from here. My plan was to send for friends in nearby places to help recover the book, but with the aid of a friend of wizard's rank, I recently learned something that renders matters too urgent for this to be feasible. Qhyjanoth will place the book into the hands of a dreadful evil power in but three days' time. I do not know exactly what bargain he has struck, but it is imperative that the book be quickly regained.

"This book is no trivial treatise. It is akin to a *manual of golems,* except that the creations described within it are nightmarish things that obey only evil creators. In the hands of a powerful and wicked mage, appalling things could be brought into being. Qhyjanoth is not so talented that he can use the book to full effect, but he has learned some of its lessons. In one town where I just missed catching up with him, a frightened innkeeper told me that Qhyjanoth laughingly called himself the Master of Puppets as he gave orders to a servant-thing made of wood and metal. It is because of arrogant slips like this that I've been able to follow him.

"Ideally, I'd like him captured alive to face justice — I know of at least seven murders he has committed — but if you have to kill him, I shall not complain. I offer the sum of 14,000 gold pieces in gems for the return of the book and the capture or execution of Qhyjanoth within four days — that includes a day's return travel. If you don't get the book within three days, you never will. You'll need to ride at dawn if you agree to this; I must have your answer by then. If you will not help, no ordinary evil will be the beneficiary. Qhyjanoth will turn the book over to emissaries from the very Hells themselves at midnight three days hence."

"Qhyjanoth is a deadlier foe than I, and I have requested guidance on how best to subdue him. My prayers indicated that I should trust to outsiders — and once I heard of you, I felt the risk of involving you in this would be worthwhile. Please consider my request, but quickly. We have little time."

The PCs may interrupt to ask questions. If they inquire about the monastic order, Aarhius tells them it is a small community of 35 scholars engaged mostly in the study of history, languages, and magic (PC magic-users can develop useful contacts here if this scenario is integrated into an ongoing campaign).

If more detail on Qhyjanoth is requested, Aarhius says that Qhyjanoth was arrogant and generally disliked, but his work was excellent and valuable to other scholars. There was no evidence of scheming or evil intent on his part before he stole the book. If asked why the monastery's library contained such a work, Aarhius points out that scholarship should not be inhibited, that very few could put it to evil use, and that access was rigidly restricted. He is defensive on this last point, however, because he still hasn't figured out how Qhyjanoth managed to steal and escape with the book.

Aarhius is adamant about the three-day deadline, which was revealed by the use of many divination spells. It is important that the element of time pressure on the PCs is retained, or the use of simple hit-and-run and siege tactics could make the adventure far too easy.

If the PCs agree to the commission, Aarhius gives them travel directions. The ruined shrine is located one-half mile to the west of the main north road out of town, in a generally wild but patrolled area. The DM should give more specific directions to fit the campaign environment (note the travel times given in the *DMG,* page 58). If the PCs do not have mounts, Aarhius hires light horses in town for them. The DM may (if the party has few magical items or has only one cleric) have Aarhius give the adventurers two potions of *healing* and a clerical scroll with *cure serious wounds* (×2), *dispel magic,* and *remove paralysis.*

Dalziel: AC 9; MV 16"; Mnk 2; hp 7; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4 (open hand); SA/SD see the *Players Handbook;* S 15, I 10, W 15, D 15, C 13, Ch 11, Co 10; AL LG; no armor, weapons, or other possessions.

Aarhius: AC 1; MV 26"; Mnk 12; hp 32; #AT 5/2; Dmg 4-16 (open hand); SA/SD see the *Players Handbook;* S 15, I 17, W 18, D 15, C 11, Ch 17, Co 14; AL LN; no armor or weapons, but has 35 gp in a belt pouch.

Reaching the Shrine

A full day's ride takes the PCs to the shrine that is their destination, arriving after dusk if they left at dawn that same day. No hostile encounters are met unless appropriate to the campaign area. Lightly wooded cover and a small pool of water near the shrine provide the perfect spot to tether mounts. The simple shrine is a one-story stonework building, 40' square and devoid of all decoration and identifying marks. The wooden door which once filled the only door frame has been smashed down, and the chamber floor within is covered in leaves and twigs.

Even a cursory look reveals a trapdoor, 5' square, set into the floor in the northeast corner of the room. There is no key in the trapdoor's small keyhole; it is locked from the inside. Opening the trapdoor requires a thief's successful *open locks* roll, a *knock* spell, or a *bend bars/lift gates* roll (the latter option alerts the ogres at area 2). Below the trapdoor, a narrow staircase leads down into darkness. The key opening the lock from below rests on the top step to one side.

Qhyjanoth discovered this ruined building a year ago and has been reworking its dungeons since then to suit his own purposes. Once used by the followers of an obscure and unpopular cult, the dungeons are the renegade monk-wizard's home for now. Most locations within the dungeon are lit by oil-burning lamps and lanterns. Assume a ceiling height of 12' in all rooms and corridors unless otherwise specified.

Level One

1. Entrance Stairs. These are unlit, and the steps descend 40' to the first dungeon level. Metal armor clanking down the stairs certainly alerts the ogres in area 2, unless a precaution such as magical *silence* is used.

A tripwire is located 6' away from the door at the bottom of the steps. The lead PC has only a 10% chance to see this wire in dim light (and no chance in darkness), unless a careful check is made or a very bright light source (such as a *continual light* spell is used, either of which increases the chance to 80%). The wire is 6" above the step, and any PC walking or running into it stumbles and falls unless his dexterity or less is rolled on 1d20 with a −4 penalty. The fall results in only 1-4 hp damage, but the PC strikes the door and is stunned for 2-5 rounds; the occupants of area 2 emerge at once.

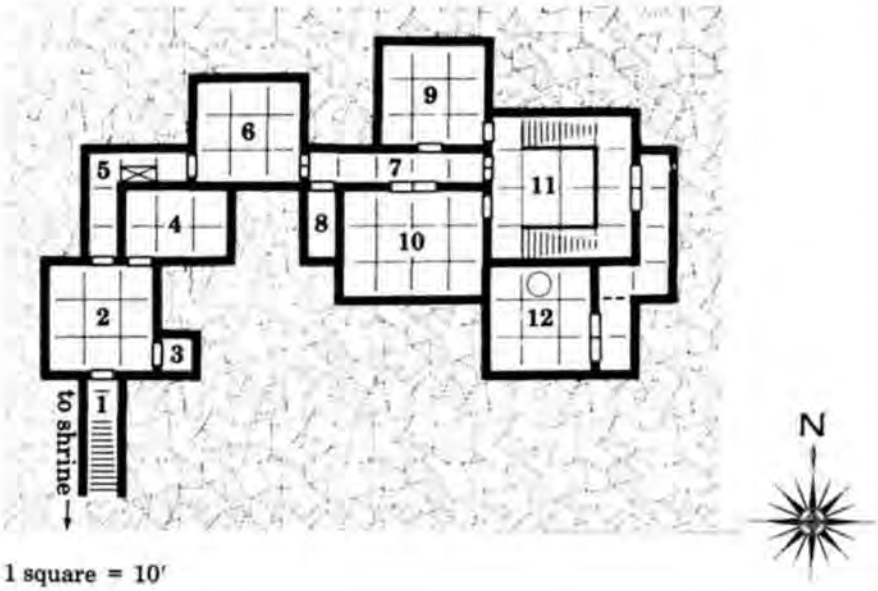
2. Ogre Guards. This chamber is crudely and sparsely furnished with one table, four chairs, and bunk beds covered in foul-smelling furs. There is nothing of value or interest here — except the bored inhabitants.

Ogres (3): AC 5; MV 9"; HD 4 + 1; hp 30, 22, 14; #AT 1; Dmg 1-10; AL CE; MM1/75; huge clubs. The ogres are *charmed* and obey Qhyjanoth alone. They are stupid and obedient enough to stay in this room 95% of the time; otherwise, one of their number will have left to take a walk near the shrine (and perhaps kill something). He will return 1-2 turns after the PCs reach this room.

3. Cloakroom. This small, unlit chamber contains a number of valueless plain cotton robes hanging from wall pegs. Crude sanitary facilities and a bowl of water are also herein. An amethyst (worth 100 gp) has been carelessly left in the pocket of one robe. One peg also holds a long, multicolored, knitted scarf and an attractively embroidered black hat that radiates magic. The scarf is warm but nonmagical. The hat appears to be a *hat of disguise;* it is actually a *hat of stupidity* and only reveals its true nature when worn on someone's head.

4. Lounge. For Qhyjanoth's rare visitors, this chamber contains two small tables, several small chairs, two poor-quality (valueless) oil paintings of unidentifiable cloaked humans, a modest glass decanter, several glasses, two small wolfskin rugs (value 50 gp each), and some bric-a-brac (a total of 100 gp worth of minor items can be gathered in one turn).

QHYJANOTH'S LAIR
Level One



1 square = 10'

5. Trapped Hallway. A pit trap lies in wait around the corner of this L-shaped hallway. The trap is concealed with a *hallucinatory terrain* spell; magical detection such as a *true seeing* spell or very careful exploration is required to avoid this trap. The pit is 20' deep (3-18 hp falling damage). Any PC falling into the pit is impaled on 1-4 of the 100 iron spikes that stand upright in the floor (impaled on 3-6 spikes if not wearing metal armor). Impaled PCs take 1-6 hp additional damage from each spike. Any PC impaled on three or more spikes can free himself from the spikes only if a strength check is successful. Otherwise, the PC is stuck and suffers an additional 1-4 hp damage per round from blood loss.

6. Conjurers. Two of Qhyjanoth's magical creations maintain an ever-vigilant guard here. These puppets are made of articulated brass, steel, and wood covered in treated cloth. Each carries a floppy hat and a short wooden wand. The puppets attack by throwing their hats; as soon as one hat is launched, another magically appears in the puppet's hand. Each puppet can use up to six hat attacks per day (one hat per round). The effective range of the hats is 30' (with a −2 penalty to hit at ranges greater than 10').

If a hat is successfully thrown onto a PC's head, roll 1d4 to determine the effect (which lasts for 2-5 rounds): 1, blinded; 2, stare at events in mute stupefaction; 3, collapse in helpless laughter; 4, attack nearest member of own party. In all cases, a save vs. spells applies. If the save is successful, the hat has no effect on the PC and disappears. A hat also disappears at the expiration of the magical effect if the save was unsuccessful. Unaffected PCs may remove hats from afflicted PCs, requiring one full round to do so (no "to hit" roll is needed). If this is done, the effect of the hat dissipates in one round, but the hat disappears as it is grabbed. A PC already wearing one such hat cannot be affected by a second, and the puppets are smart enough to know this and direct attacks accordingly.

Each puppet can make a second attack per round with its wand, striking for 2-12 hp electrical damage (save vs. spells for half damage). The wands are usable only by the puppets.

Conjurer puppets (2): AC 5; MV 9"; HD 7+7; hp 40, 30; #AT 2; Dmg 2-12 and special; SA hats; SD immune to mind-affecting spells, electrical attacks, poisons, paralysis, and gas attacks; surprised only on 1 in 12; AL N.

7. Warning System. Qhyjanoth has set an *alarm* spell in this corridor. If the *alarm* sounds, the guards in area 9 emerge to fight intruders. Qhyjanoth, who is initially in area 10, retreats to area 11 and views events with a *clairvoyance* spell (he is, of course, totally familiar with all locations in this dungeon). For further suggestions as to his actions, see area 10.

There is a pressure-triggered plate directly in front of the doors entering from area 6. A weight of at least 10 lbs. on this plate causes a bell to ring in area 10 even if the PCs dispel the magical *alarm*. Even if the puppets in area 9 are not magically alerted, Qhyjanoth is then aware of the PCs' presence and retreats to area 11, from which he enters area 9 and dispatches the puppets to fight.

Finally, Qhyjanoth has cast a *magic mouth* spell on the corridor side of the doors to area 11. The *mouth* shouts "Someone's come to see you!" for two rounds if any humanoid other than Qhyjanoth enters the corridor. This, of course, alerts both Qhyjanoth and his puppet guards in area 9.

8. Storage Chamber. This unlit chamber contains food, oil, lamps, a quantity of wood and tarred cloths, fabric, ropes, and the like. The DM should prepare a list of the contents only if a determined examination of the room is made.

9. Workroom. This chamber is bare except for a single rosewood table, some scattered chairs, and a very long (20') workbench set against the middle of the north wall. The bench contains raw materials for puppet construction: tarred and treated heavy cloth, several ingots of brass and bronze (total value 650 gp), acidic tempering agents in earthenware jugs, and hand tools. The guards here are similar in appearance to those in area 6, but they do not carry hats or wands. Instead, they have large bronze-covered fists.

Stun puppets (2): AC 2; MV 9"; HD 6+6; hp 37, 32; #AT 2; Dmg 2-11/2-11; SA stunning; SD immune to mind-affecting spells, electrical attacks, poisons, paralysis, and gas attacks; AL N. Blows from the puppets which hit on a natural 19 or 20 stun the victim (−4 on "to hit" rolls, −2 to damage, +4 AC penalty, movement rate halved, spell-casting impossible) for 2-7 rounds. These puppets attack anyone other than Qhyjanoth.

10. Library/Study. When the PCs first enter this room, Qhyjanoth (if he has not been alerted) is here at work. The DM may choose Qhyjanoth's area of study and thus the nature of the books found here to suit the circumstances of his campaign. Otherwise, all books are general works on astronomy, archaeology, theology, philosophy, etc. There are certainly some volumes here on the construction of puppets and lesser golems. The PCs may gather up to 2,000 gp worth of valuable (but nonmagical — and heavy) books here. The room is furnished with two sturdy tables bearing quills, papers and vellums, inks of diverse color, and the like (total value for such materials is 200 gp), and with chairs, bookcases, ledgers, and minor ornaments. Qhyjanoth also keeps an unlikely trophy here: a stuffed basilisk with eyes fashioned from small clusters of zircons; the gems are worth a total of 1,200 gp.

If the stun puppets from area 9 are in melee with the PCs, Qhyjanoth views the scene with a *clairvoyance* spell. Unless the PCs overwhelm the puppets quickly, Qhyjanoth casts a *shield* spell (for protection against *magic missile* attacks) and an *invisibility* spell, then opens the doors and enters the corridor. He attempts to use one major spell attack on a PC (notably, a *feeblemind* spell on a spell-caster). If the puppets can then still block the PCs' route to him, Qhyjanoth attempts a further attack to weaken the PCs. He may use a *stinking cloud* spell to affect a group of PCs, then an *ice storm* spell on the helpless adventurers, using his own *magic missile* attack to kill off any PCs who stumble out of the *cloud* toward him. Check the areas of spell effects for such an attack sequence; if the PCs have left open the corridor doors exiting west to area 6, Qhyjanoth can use an *ice storm* spell without fear of being caught within its area of effect.

Qhyjanoth has a *contingency* spell in effect: If reduced to 15 hp or less, he is at once sent via *dimension door* to area 20 (he will not use his *dimension door* spell otherwise). Finally, if he can dispose of one PC here, Qhyjanoth is satisfied and retreats, hoping to lure the remaining PCs farther into his lair and kill them at his leisure. In his arrogance, Qhyjanoth makes mocking and sarcastic comments as he effects his strategic withdrawal.

11. Living Chamber. This room is comfortably decorated, with tables bearing decanters of wine and spirits, silver goblets, fine crockery, linen tablecloths, leather armchairs, animal-skin rugs, and other items of comfort. (The PCs may collect 700 gp worth of minor treasure items here.) The gallery at the east end of the room stands 8' higher than the floor of the room. The overall ceiling height is 15' here, 7' in the gallery. The doors exiting east are *wizard locked* at the 11th level of magic-use (Qhyjanoth placed this protection here some months ago and has not thought to renew it at a higher level).

12. Bare Chamber. This chamber is entirely devoid of decoration. There is an 8'-diameter opening in the northern half of the room, leading to a 30'-deep round hole with almost sheer walls (a thief may use his *climb walls* ability normally here). As an 11th-level monk, Qhyjanoth can fall this distance with impunity.

If the PCs are in hot pursuit, Qhyjanoth pauses before jumping to pull a stout lever of metal and wood set into the floor just east of the hole. This lever opens a vent in the room's south wall (next to the door) from which poisonous gas issues, filling the chamber entirely with gas in 3-6 rounds. The gas is lighter than air and takes 5-8 turns to disperse even with the exit doors open (although a *gust of wind* will disperse it in a single round). This gas is lethal, and any PC inhaling it dies in 3-6 rounds unless a *neutralize poison* or *slow poison* spell is cast on him. A saving throw vs. poison merely delays death by 3d4+3 rounds.

The lever also causes a 2"-thick wooden door to descend from the ceiling in the corridor 20' back from the entrance doors to this chamber, thus sealing off the room. This door can be broken down in one turn by three or more PCs with combined strength scores of 45 or greater. Other methods may be used as allowed by the DM.

Level Two

13. Undead Guards. This bare chamber contains what is left of several previous intruders, plus another unpleasant puppet guardian.

Zombies (8): AC 8; MV 6"; HD 2; hp 13 (×4), 12 (×4); #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SD immune to *sleep, charm, hold,* and cold-based spells; AL N; MM1/103. These zombies were low-level mercenary fighters who deserted their comrades and found the shrine a few months ago. Qhyjanoth was alerted when they broke into the shrine, and destroyed them with ease. He will "recruit" any adventurers slain herein to join the zombies' ranks. The zombies attack anyone but Qhyjanoth.

Ventriloquist puppet: AC 3; MV 15"; HD 5+5; hp 33; #AT 2; Dmg 1-6/1-6 (fists); SA +1 on initiative rolls, spell use, drumming; SD spell use, immune to mind-affecting spells, poisons, paralysis, and gas attacks; saves as 16th-level magic-user; 15% magic resistance; AL LE. This infuriating creature was once a ventriloquist's dummy, but by some hideous arcane means it took possession of its owner's mind and now possesses his intelligence. Qhyjanoth has given it greater powers by magical means, and in exchange it is serving him for a limited duration. The puppet can cast a *ventriloquism* spell six times per day (with which it causes maximum distraction and confusion) and the following spells once per day each: *command, hypnotism, improved invisibility,* and *suggestion.* The puppet may use only one of these spells per round. It is armed with two rods of wood and metal with which it can beat out a tattoo on any solid surface. After three continuous rounds of listening to this drumming, PCs must save vs. spells or be *confused* as per the fourth-level magic-user spell for the duration of the drumming and for 2-5 rounds after it stops. The puppet can melee and use spells in the same round, but while drumming it cannot undertake any other offensive action or cast spells. It attacks anyone but Qhyjanoth — but, unlike the zombies, it will flee after Qhyjanoth if it is injured.

14. Snake Guards. The eight snakes here are kept safely within huge glass vessels, although Qhyjanoth is immune to the poisonous effects of their bites. These jars are located on plinths along the center of the room, the chamber being otherwise bare save a mural depicting writhing snakes along the north wall. Unless he is being hotly pursued by the PCs, Qhyjanoth stands just outside this room, in area 16, with the north doors of area 14 ajar, using his *hear noise* skill (add 30% for the open doors). If he hears PCs attempt to enter room 14 (a door handle turning or a door frame splintering), he gains automatic initiative for the coming round. Qhyjanoth casts a *shout* spell as the PCs enter; this shatters the glass vessels and frees the snakes, which suffer 1-6 hp damage from the spell but are +1 to hit in their fury (the statistics below take these effects into account). PCs within the spell's range are affected as usual. Qhyjanoth then closes the door leading to area 16 to await the PCs (if they survive).

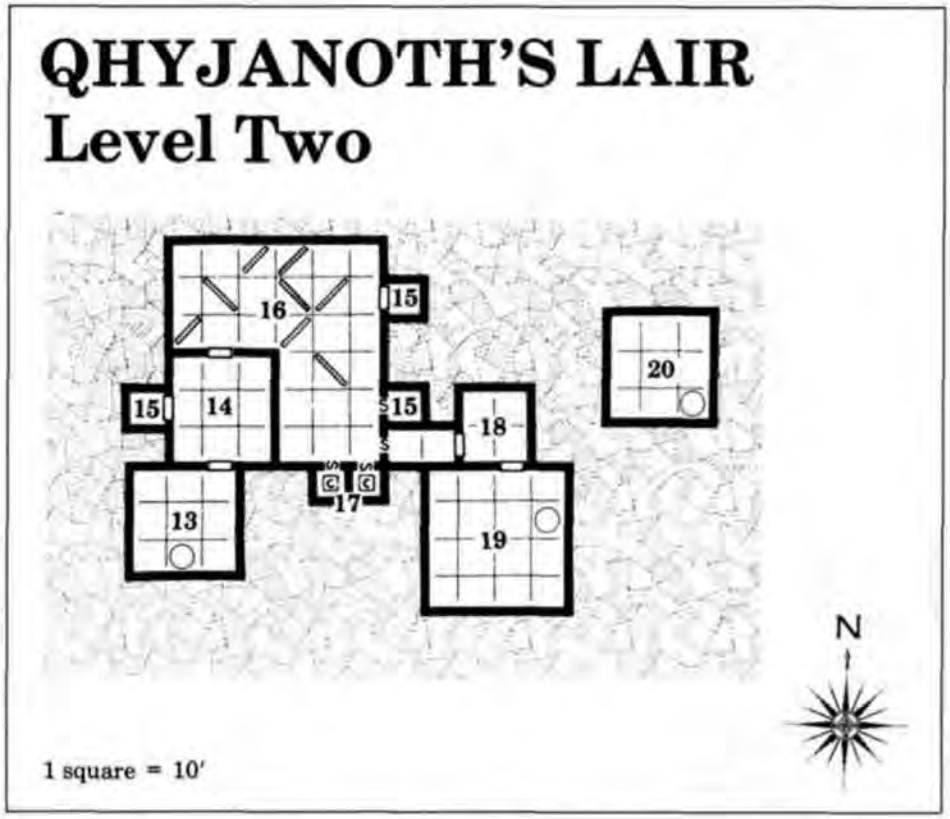
Poisonous snakes (6): AC 6; MV 15"; HD 2+1; hp 11, 10, 8 (×2), 7, 4; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA poison (for extra 3-12 hp damage, save vs. poison for no damage); AL N; MM2/111.

Lethal poisonous snakes (2): AC 6; MV 15"; HD 2+1; hp 12, 4; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA poison (lethal in 1-3 rounds, save vs. poison for no damage); AL N; MM2/111. The lethal and nonlethal snakes cannot be distinguished visually, as all of them are green with yellow and olive-green banding on their dorsal surfaces.

15. Spear Traps. When the entrance door to any of these bare alcoves is opened, a volley of six spears shoots forth, striking at characters directly in front of the door as if wielded by a 4-HD monster for 2-7 hp damage per spear.

16. Chamber of Confusion. Prior to conducting operations in this unlit room, Qhyjanoth casts an *infravision* spell and coats himself with *oil of slipperiness.* Distracting murals cover all the walls, portraying a variety of outlandish scenes (gigantic frogs dressed in plate mail, halberd-wielding leprechauns, etc.). The walls, ceiling, and floor of the room all radiate magic. Several small puppets of wood and metal are affixed to the walls; the puppets are harmless but look very dangerous, especially if the PCs have previously encountered similar creations.

The diagonals marked on the map of this room are lacquered screens bolted



to the floor and covered in very thick glue. Any PC who touches a screen must make a dexterity check or be stuck fast to the screen for 5-8 rounds. If the stuck PC makes a successful strength check, he does not extricate himself but instead pulls the screen clear of its attachment to the floor. The PC remains firmly attached to the screen unless aided, but the glue is readily soluble in any form of alcohol. Qhyjanoth avoids any problem with these tricky barriers by using his *oil of slipperiness.*

In combat here, Qhyjanoth uses all his remaining powerful spells (*telekinesis, hold person, burning hands,* etc.), and uses his *wand of fog* (see end of module) to prevent spell-casters from getting a clear view of him. He reserves his *confusion* spell for a final area attack, then uses a *monster summoning V* spell to conjure a pair of minotaurs to fight for him. When he wishes to escape, Qhyjanoth uses the command word "Commence" to activate over 100 *magic mouth* spells located on the walls, ceiling, and floor. The *magic mouths* babble gibberish at maximum volume for one round, preventing the casting of all spells with verbal components. Qhyjanoth then retreats to area 20 to await the final combat, after obscuring the southeast corner of the room with fog.

Minotaurs (2): AC 6; MV 12"; HD 6+3; hp 37, 25; #AT 2; Dmg 1-4 and by weapon type (add +2 damage bonus due to strength and vicious disposition); SD surprised only on 1; AL CE; MM1/71; halberds. The minotaurs cannot see in the dark and attack at random, but never each other or Qhyjanoth.

17. Dual Trap. If the door to either of these bare alcoves is touched by a PC, that character becomes stuck fast to it by a thick glue; only an immediate *open doors* roll allows the PC to pull free. The 5'-wide door immediately falls over into the 10' × 10' pit beyond (these rooms have no floors, and the doors have no hinges; they are merely set loosely into their frames). As soon as the door's weight strikes the bottom of the 20'-deep pit, acid gushes forth from vents in the east and west walls 10' above the floor of the pit. The acid does 1-8 hp damage per round and continues to flow for one turn, leaving a 5'-deep pool.

At the same time, a secret sliding door opens in the ceiling of the alcove (28' above the bottom of the pit), liberating rocks from an 8' cubic area above. These rocks fall for 2-4 rounds, causing 1-8 hp crushing damage per round to anyone in the pit. On the bright side, however, the acid dissolves the glue adhering the PC to the door in 2-4 rounds.

18. Bare Chamber. The entrance door from area 16 is protected by a *fire trap* spell. If triggered, it explodes for 15-18 hp damage. Qhyjanoth placed this spell here to slow down pursuit, though he himself may use the door without triggering the explosion.

19. Relaxation Chamber. This room is luxuriously appointed, with animal-skin rugs and woolen carpets (total value 3,200 gp), tables with fine lace and linen covers (total value 170 gp), silvered wall mirrors (too heavy to carry, although worth a total value of 700 gp), silver cutlery and plates, tureens, a tea samovar, decanters, and glasses (total value for these 1,600 gp). The south wall holds a shelf of musical instruments of diverse kinds. The two most unusual instruments are a highly varnished antique lute (value 2,200 gp) and a *cor anglais* (English horn) upon which some joker has placed *Nystul's magic aura.*

The 6'-diameter borehole in the eastern part of the ceiling ascends 24'; *climb walls* ability or spells such as *fly* or *levitate* are needed to gain access to the opening. Qhyjanoth has a 99.1% chance to *climb walls* and has no trouble ascending to area 20, his private lair.

20. The Retreat. Wall frescoes and plain cotton wall hangings are this room's only decorations. A spartan cot and a small chest take up very little space here. If he has not been previously defeated, Qhyjanoth is lurking here (see statistics at end of module). When the PCs enter area 19, he reaches into his *bag of tricks,* pulls out animals (the bag has only five uses left this week) and drops them down the hole into area 19. This will certainly be messy and probably rather startling, too, as the animals attack the PCs on sight. Animals dropped on rounds 1, 2, and 5 simply splatter on the floor and expire, but those dropped on rounds 3 and 4 survive the drop (their hit-point totals given are adjusted for falling damage). Qhyjanoth abandons this attack mode if one or more PCs make the ascent to attack him in his lair.

Creatures drawn from the *bag of tricks* are:

Rounds 1, 2, and 5: a goat, which does not survive the drop. Anyone struck by the goat as it falls takes 3-12 hp damage (roll for Qhyjanoth to hit at −2).

Rounds 3 and 4: a **bull:** AC 7; MV 6" (injured); HD 4; hp 6, 12; #AT 2; Dmg 1-6/1-6; SA charge; AL N; MM1/12. Anyone struck by a falling bull takes 3-24 hp damage.

Before his final attack, Qhyjanoth deploys any remaining useful spells (consider the items he has available as well as his memorized spells) and uses his healing abilities (he can heal himself of 6-9 hp damage) and healing potions. His final tactic is simple; he casts his *anti-magic shell* spell, jumps down the hole into area 19 (incurring no damage), and then simply tries to kill the PCs with his bare hands.

Within the radius of the *anti-magic shell,* no spells will work (including healing spells), and such items as magical rings, shields, armor, and weapons lose all functions and magical bonuses (but permanent magical items do not

lose their powers permanently). If the DM applies weapon type vs. AC adjustments for hit rolls, plate mail is treated as AC 3, and Qhyjanoth has a −5 penalty to his "to hit" rolls. If PCs have field or full plate armor, Qhyjanoth receives penalties for open-hand striking of −7 and −8 respectively.

The chest in this area is *fire trapped* (15-18 hp damage) and contains valuables and magical treasures largely unusable by Qhyjanoth. One of the three pouches within the chest contains seven amethysts (value 100 gp each). The second pouch contains eight gold rings, seven set with chrysoprases and one containing a small sapphire (total value 2,500 gp). The last pouch contains two blocks of *incense of meditation*. A silver scroll tube (value 200 gp) contains three scrolls (removed from old enemies). The first is a clerical scroll of *cure serious wounds;* the second contains the illusionist spell *phantom steed;* and the third holds the illusionist spells *wraithform, dispel magic,* and *rainbow* (all at the 9th level of spell use).

A small casket of silver with a silk and velvet lining (value 275 gp) contains a matched set of a brooch, necklace, and earrings (values 1,000 gp, 1,200 gp, 2,700 gp). In a stout leather case are three crystal vials (worth 30 gp apiece), each of which contains a potion. Two of the liquids are azure blue and taste minty (*extra-healing*), and one is opaque and chocolate colored, tasting of rotten fish (*ghast control*).

Finally, a secret compartment at the bottom of the chest hides a *dagger of throwing +3*, a silver-banded rosy quartz vial containing 20 ounces of *ultimate solution* (the vial alone is worth 300 gp), and a volume bound in black dragon hide and measuring 15" × 12" × 6". This is the *libram of constructs*, the book Aarhius has sent the PCs to retrieve. Qhyjanoth's spell books may also be found here, though their possession by PC magic-user could unbalance a campaign. All of the spells Qhyjanoth knows, including *read magic* and *write*, are present. Optionally, the spellbook might be trapped to slowly dissolve when handled by anyone other than Qhyjanoth for longer than one turn.

Concluding the Adventure

Whether or not the PCs are successful in killing or overcoming Qhyjanoth and retrieving the *libram of constructs*, Aarhius and Dalziel meet the party on the road back to town. The monks are mounted and accompanied by 12 other mounted monks, acquired as a last-ditch assault team from a nearby monastary in the event the PCs failed in the mission against Qhyjanoth. Aarhius takes the book (and custody of Qhyjanoth, if he is still alive) and gives the PCs 14 gems, each worth 1,000 gp. None of the monks has any other treasure.

Allied monks (12): AC 7; MV 18"; Mnk 4; hp 13 each; #AT 5/4; Dmg 1-6 (open hand); SA/SD see the *Players Handbook*, allowing the *speak with animals* power to reduce the chances that their horses will panic to 10%; S 15, W 15, D 15, all other statistics assumed to be 11; AL LN; no armor, but each 4th-level monk carries a hand axe.

Light horses (14): AC 7; MV 24"; HD 2; hp 9 each; #AT 2; Dmg 1-4/1-4 (hooves); SD only 10% likely to panic (see above), except for horse ridden by 2nd-level monk, Dalziel; AL N; MM1/53; saddles, bridles, reins, saddlebags with food.

If the PCs try to run off with the book, these monks (with other allies, if the DM adds them) chase them down to take the book by force. If successful, Aarhius pays the PCs nothing and takes them into custody, their fate to be decided by the monks of his order at a later date.

If the PCs are forced to flee the shrine or sustain excessive casualties, Aarhius leaves them behind as he and his allies attack the shrine themselves. He pays the PCs 5,000 gp before leaving. The outcome of this fight is left to the DM.

The PCs may still be fighting when time runs out. If they are still trying to overcome the monk-mage at midnight on the third game day, a pit fiend turns up to collect the book. He is here for just one purpose and won't fight the PCs unless forced to, preferring to drive the adventurers off with threats and his innate spell powers. The PCs should have the sense to run away, but if they try to fight the pit fiend, the DM should have no qualms about killing them.

Zamatog, the pit fiend: AC −3; MV 6"/15"; HD 13; hp 79; #AT 2; Dmg by weapon type (+6 for strength); SA/SD see *Monster Manual*, page 23; AL LE. Zamatog (not his true name, of course) prefers to use a bastard sword and short sword simultaneously, unlike others of his kind.

If Qyjanoth escapes, with or without the help of the pit fiend, the PCs may be sent to find and overcome him. If the PCs are successful in catching him, however, Aarhius or his friends might offer them further commissions. The extensive library of Aarhius's order may contain texts of ancient mystery or prophecy, or even a treasure map if an academic PC looks carefully. The *libram of constructs* is detailed at the end of this adventure. The PCs should not be allowed to keep or use it, but they may run into it again in future adventures.

New Magical Items

Wand of Fog

When activated, this wand creates 1,000 cubic feet of fog per round for 7-12 rounds, as per the first-level illusionist spell *wall of fog*. Such usage drains the wand of one charge. The initial 10' × 10' × 10' fog cube can be centered on any area within 60' of the wand user and within his range of vision. On subsequent rounds, additional cubes of fog can be created in adjacent 10' × 10' × 10' areas as willed by the wand user. Each fog cube persists for one turn after its creation. The wand is usable by all classes and may be recharged by an illusionist of 12th or higher level. It can hold up to 100 charges.
XP Value: 1,750 **GP Sale Value:** 8,000

Libram of Constructs

The *libram* is a magical work giving full instructions for the manufacture of a range of golemlike constructs. The book radiates an evil aura, but may be used by any alignment. A magic-user of 12th or higher level may manufacture any of the puppets detailed in the scenario (except the ventriloquist puppet, which requires a 14th-level magic-user creator). The manufacture of any such puppet requires a minimum of six weeks' magical research and construction, using materials and spells as the DM rules appropriate (see the following for an example). However, without a *limited wish* spell, there is a 1% chance per day that the mage is not able to control the puppet, which then attacks everything in sight. Without a *permanency* spell, there is a 1% chance per

day that the puppet simply falls apart and is useless. Only an evil magic-user has control over his creations using this book; all others who build constructs using this book are immediately attacked by their creations, which gain a +4 to hit against good-aligned magic-users.

Only an evil magic-user of 18th or higher level can use the *libram* to build the single greater construct detailed in the work: a black golem. This entails three months' research and enchantments, and requires a perfectly crafted iron figure topped with the skull of a lich. *Enchant an item, wish,* and *permanency* spells are required for the manufacture of the golem. Special powers are instilled by the use of further spells. *Gate* and *permanency* spells are combined to create the open channel to the Negative Material Plane that gives the construct its ability to drain energy (one level) by blow. Two *gems of seeing* are fitted into its eye sockets, giving the golem the ability to see hidden, *invisible,* out of phase, astral, and ethereal objects and creatures. A *protection from normal missiles* spell and a *limited wish* are employed to give the creature immunity to all nonmagical weapons. Use of both versions of the *fire shield* spell gives the creature resistance to both fire and cold attacks. Finally, a combination of *darkness 15' radius, phantasmal force,* and *slow* spells gives the golem its terrifying appearance, shrouded in a dark, shadowy penumbra in which wraiths and spectres appear to flit about (it is possible to see the golem, but indistinctly).

Any creature approaching within 15' of the golem must save vs. spells or be *slowed* for 22 rounds. Attacks against it are made at −2 to hit in addition to other penalties. Armed with a huge two-handed sword which does fearful damage in addition to the energy drain, the black golem is a powerful guard for any evil magician's lair. While it is technically unintelligent, the black golem can follow quite complex instructions from its creator, making it a dreadful nemesis if so commanded.

It is whispered that a magic-user of 21st level or above with a minimum intelligence score of 19 can use the *libram of constructs* to create a still more powerful form of the black golem, a semisentient construct which can create juju zombies and other undead, commanding them in the service of the mage who created it. This nightmare creation can *charm person* by gaze and has other powers which hardly bear contemplation.

The DM may, in a future adventure, have the PCs encounter a black golem created by this work, if the book is stolen again or was not recovered during this mission.

Black golem: AC −1; MV 9"; HD 12; #AT 1; Dmg 2-20; SA energy drain, *slowing;* SD magical weapons to hit, saves at +2 against fire- and cold-based attacks (taking half or no damage), detects hidden/invisible/out-of-phase objects and creatures, immune to mind-influencing spells, −2 to be hit; AL NE.

The DM should detail or modify the powers of this item as appropriate to his campaign. Use of this item by PCs is not recommended as it may damage campaign balance. If this item is allowed to reach the Hells, it will then reappear in the hands of the most powerful lawful-evil magic-user in the campaign world, as a reward for his services to his alignment.

Qhyjanoth, "Master of Puppets"
11th-level monk/14th-level magic-user

ARMOR CLASS: *2*
MOVE: *25"*
HIT POINTS: *62*
NO. OF ATTACKS: *5/2 (open-handed; refuses to use melee weapons)*
DAMAGE/ATTACK: *4-13 (open-handed)*
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*
SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*
MAGIC RESISTANCE: *Standard*
SIZE: *M (6'1" tall, 166 lbs.)*
ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*
PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*

S	I	W	D	C	Ch	Co
15	18	17	15	16	12	16

Thief abilities:

OL	FT	MS	HS	HN	CW
72%	70%	86%	70%	35%	99.1%

Spells: *alarm, burning hands, charm person, magic missile, shield, darkness 15' radius, detect invisibility, ESP, invisibility, stinking cloud, clairvoyance, dispel magic, hold person, infravision, Melf's minute meteors, confusion, dimension door, ice storm, shout, animate dead, feeblemind, hold monster, telekinesis, anti-magic shell, contingency, monster summoning V.*

Monk abilities:
— *speak with animals* and *speak with plants,* as per the druidic spells, once per day each.
— 84% resistant to *ESP* spells.
— immune to disease, poison, *haste* and *slow* spells.
— may *feign death* (for 22 turns) once per day.
— 60% resistant to *beguiling, charm, hypnosis,* and *suggestion* spells.
— can fall up to 30' if within 10' of a wall.
— can heal self of 6-9 hp damage once per day.
— saves vs. petrification to avoid nonmagical missiles.
— saves vs. area-damage spells for no damage; takes half damage if saving throw is failed.
— 14% chance to be surprised.
— stuns on hit at least +5 above minimum "to hit" score needed; chance to kill with stunning blow is (4 + AC of victim)%.

Other abilities:
— No bonuses to armor class from dexterity score.
— Speaks common tongue, lawful evil, and seven other languages of the DM's choice.
— +3 bonus to saving throw vs. willforce spells.
— 95% system-shock survival roll.
— 96% *resurrection* survival roll.

Magical items carried: *ring of fire resistance; ring of free action;* vial with two applications of *oil of slipperiness; bag of tricks;* two potions of *extra-healing; wand of fog* with 29 charges.

Personal treasure: gold signet ring (value 80 gp); gold, coral, and platinum neck chain with large inset aquamarine (value 1,200 gp); solid silver bracelet (value 120 gp); silk robes with gold and silver embroidery (value 850 gp); gem-set silver robe pin (value 650 gp).

Appearance: Qhyjanoth appears to be 57 years old, but his chronological age is actually 68; he has used a potion of *longevity.* The mage-monk has short-cropped straight black hair, a pale complexion, green-hazel eyes, high cheekbones, and slender limbs.

History: After attaining 11th level as a monk, Qhyjanoth began to study the arcane arts. Through daring adventures and long hours of study, he has attained 14th level as a magic-user. Because his level as a magic-user exceeds his previously attained level as a monk, he may freely mix the skills and abilities of both classes (see the *Players Handbook,* page 33).

Qhyjanoth is a cruel, arrogant, and wholly self-centered man who holds most people in utter contempt. He mocks PCs who are in trouble and enjoys drawing out their sufferings for as long as possible if he has the upper hand, sometimes delaying the coup de grace if he is in no immediate danger. His major weakness is his overweening pride. If challenged by one or more PCs, he may be provoked into a direct attack when this would not be the wisest course of action. However, he has a very strong sense of personal survival. If cornered by the PCs, he may surrender, but only if it appears that the PCs have suffered no losses and are in strong fighting trim. He will not surrender before attempting to melee with the protection of his *anti-magic shell.* Only if this final melee goes badly for him will he contemplate surrendering to save his own life (and escape later).

Qhyjanoth serves the arch-devil Asmodeus and plans to trade the magical manual for improved personal abilities, particularly an extended lifespan and more magical spells. He is completely loyal to Asmodeus and wishes to serve the arch-devil in any manner possible. If he escapes, Qhyjanoth will eventually be given special missions to perform that will serve the causes of the Hells on the Prime Material plane; thus, he will eventually be encountered by the PCs at a future date. Ω

LETTERS

(continued from page 3)

level adventures are the hardest kind to write, in my opinion. I consider them a great challenge and delight.

Larry Church
Longview, Washington

Larry is the author of "Forbidden Mountain" (issue #6) and "Secrets of the Towers" (issue #10).

Manual References Needed

An improvement to the modules you print would be a listing of the monsters found in the adventure, including the manual and page of each.

I enjoy the adventures greatly, but I spend a lot of time finding the monsters in each scenario. An example is "The Plight of Cirria" (issue #9). The cyclops encountered is not detailed in the module and is not found in either *Monster Manual I* or *II* or the FIEND FOLIO® tome. I found it (him?) in the DEITIES & DEMIGODS™ cyclopedia, page 67, after remembering which mythology the cyclops is in.

Randy Bisig
Fulton, Missouri

This is a good suggestion, and we've implemented it beginning with this issue. The statistics for each monster encountered will contain an abbreviated reference showing where more information on that monster may be found. The various manuals will get the following abbreviations:

MM1 = Monster Manual
MM2 = Monster Manual II
FF = *FIEND FOLIO® tome*
LL = Legends & Lore
OA = Oriental Adventures
MP = Manual of the Planes
DL = DRAGONLANCE® Adventures
BD = *D&D® Basic Set* Dungeon Masters Rulebook
ER = *D&D* Expert Rulebook
CD = *D&D Companion Set* Dungeon Masters Companion: Book Two
MD = *D&D* Master DM's Book
CC = *D&D* Creature Catalogue

The DEITIES & DEMIGODS™ Cyclopedia is now called Legends & Lore. *The reference to the lesser cyclops can be found on page 62 of this volume (page numbers may not directly correspond to the earlier edition).*

Enjoys Bizarre Covers

Ryan Fox attacks covers and solo adventures in "Letters" of #13 — first thing I see on opening the issue!! Ouch!

Personally, I enjoyed the bizarre, non-typical covers, and I've been about to write you requesting you carry one solo adventure per issue as a policy!

I guess it depends on who/where/when you play. I no longer belong to a group and play solo most of the time. I've tons of group and DM-run adventures and too few solo items. I've even gone to the trouble of converting some group adventures to solo play. I've bought "Proteus" magazine, "Diceman," etc. — anything for solo play.

The one thing I hate about solo play is the "oops — you're dead" syndrome. In order to get maximum variation of play, the solo game authors seem to love the situation where the player is given two choices. Choose wrong and the character immediately dies. Very frustrating. Frankly, I think that every situation should have some chance to save, however low the percentage is.

Howard Leroy Davis
Fort Worth, Texas
Ω

PHANTASM CHASM

BY ERIK KJERLAND

One good ambush can lead to another.

Artwork by Richard Bennett

Twenty-year-old Erik Kjerland attends Green River Community College in the state of Washington. He started gaming seven years ago when a friend introduced him to the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Basic Set. The idea for this module came to him as he was hiking into a box canyon that "looked like a good place for an ambush."

This AD&D® module can be used when the adventurers are passing through a mountain range. A strong party of 4-8 characters of levels 4-7 is suggested. The presence of several fighters is imperative to the success of the encounter, and a ranger, magic-user, and thief would help considerably. Some of the NPCs in this adventure have spells described in *Unearthed Arcana.*

Adventure Background

It is early morning, and the player characters are breaking camp after having climbed the highest point of a mountain pass the previous night. The reason for their presence in this stretch of the wilderness is left to the DM's discretion. When the PCs have packed all their gear and are on the road, read or paraphrase the following:

> Yesterday afternoon, you traversed the highest point of a mountain pass, hoping to gain time that would be lost by circumventing the high peaks. Even though these ridges and valleys are spoken of with dread by the inhabitants of the lowlands, you decided that it was worth the risk.
>
> On this your third day in the pass, the sun rises over the eastern ridges, and you set out under a clear blue sky. Your cloaks wave in the breeze behind you, and the mountain cold struggles through even your thickest furs. You start off down the path, content in your knowledge that the worst of the trek is behind you and now only the weaker slopes of the northern range lie ahead.
>
> After nearly four hours of travel, the rising sun has warmed the chill. As you round a bend in the trail, [the lead PC] sights something in the road ahead. You hurry forward to investigate and discover the body of a man, heavily clothed against the cold but quite dead, the killing sword still imbedded in his chest.

For the Dungeon Master

This stretch of the path is used as a trap for unwary travelers by a group of 31 bugbears led by two evil illusionists. These illusionists, Pastin and Lopper, encountered the bugbears some months ago and quickly fell in with them, taking on the job of "advisors" to the chief. Soon, however, the illusionists had taken over control of the tribe in such a way that the chief was left as a figurehead and the shaman was left dead.

Pastin decided that, since the tribe was located near a pass through the mountains, it would be advantageous to utilize this as a source of revenue. An intelligent individual, he realized that any overt raids on caravans would soon result in a band of heavily armored knights coming up the mountains and wiping out the bugbear band. Therefore, Pastin would have to pick his victims carefully, and he soon determined that groups of traveling adventurers would be prime targets: Their whereabouts are usually not known, they sometimes carry large amounts of wealth, and they often own useful magical items.

Pastin next ordered the bugbears to raid a tribe of orcs and bring back a score of prisoners. These orcs were used to trick the victims into believing that their enemies were a band of the weaker humanoids instead of large bugbears. The bugbears also captured a few mountain men to use as bait. A fake camp was set up in a box canyon near the pass, and bugbear scouts were placed down the trail a few miles in each direction. When a scout spied a group of travelers approaching, it had instructions to hurry back to Pastin, who then ordered Lopper to set up the trap. Pastin then used his *ring of flying* (see the end of the module) and *invisibility* spell to see if the travelers would make good targets. If so, he swooped back to the canyon and ordered the baiting of the trap.

Pastin has successfully completed this trap twice, and so far he has suffered no repercussions from civilization. No one has even noticed that two parties of adventurers are missing. Some mountaineers have noted that the orc population in the area is diminishing but have not bothered to find out why. The PCs are the third victims to encounter the trap, and it remains to be seen if they are luckier than their predecessors.

Pastin: AC 6; MV 12"; I8; hp 25; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 9, I 17, W 15, D 16, C 11, Ch 13; AL NE; *ring of flying* (new magical item), *dagger +3, cloak of protection +2;* spells: *chromatic orb, color spray, darkness, spook, fog cloud, improved phantasmal force, invisibility, continual light, invisibility 10' radius, massmorph.*

Lopper: AC 8; MV 12"; I6; hp 15; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 10, I 15, W 14, D 15, C 13, Ch 11; AL NE; dagger, *dusty rose prism ioun stone* (gives *protection +1),* potions of *extra-healing* and *gaseous form;* spells: *change self, color spray, detect invisibility, wall of fog, invisibility, fog cloud, hypnotic pattern, phantom steed.*

Normal bugbear warriors (28): AC 5; MV 9"; *HD 3+1;* hp 21, 20 (×2), 19 (×6), 18 (×10), 16 (×3), 15 (×3), 14, 13 (×2); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type +1 (see below); SA surprise on 1-3; AL CE; MM1/12; each wears patchwork armor and carries weapons as described in the section "The Camp."

Bugbear leader and subchief: AC 4; MV 9"; HD 4; hp 25, 24; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type +2 (see below); SA surprise on 1-3; AL CE; MM1/12. The leader carries a morning star, and the subchief has a *spear +1.*

Bugbear chief: AC 3; MV 9"; HD 4; hp 28; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type +3 (see below); SA surprise on 1-3; AL CE; MM1/12; *two-handed sword +2.*

These 31 bugbears are the male members of a band that has roamed this portion of the mountains for generations. Unknown to the bugbears or illusionists, the water in the stream that supplies the bugbears' lair is slightly magical. This dweomer manifests itself only if the water is imbibed regularly and over a long period of time. The magic has caused the bugbears to grow stronger, so that each gets a +1 damage modifier on successful hits. This water also gives the bugbears higher than average hit points.

Into the Trap

The dead man on the trail is a mountain trapper. Upon inspection, the PCs can see that the full-bearded man has been dead for no more than three hours. His possessions have been ransacked and everything of value taken. Lying about him are a torn backpack, a few uncured skins, a dagger, and several metal traps. The sword in his chest is obviously of orcish make. Numerous footprints dot the ground around the body.

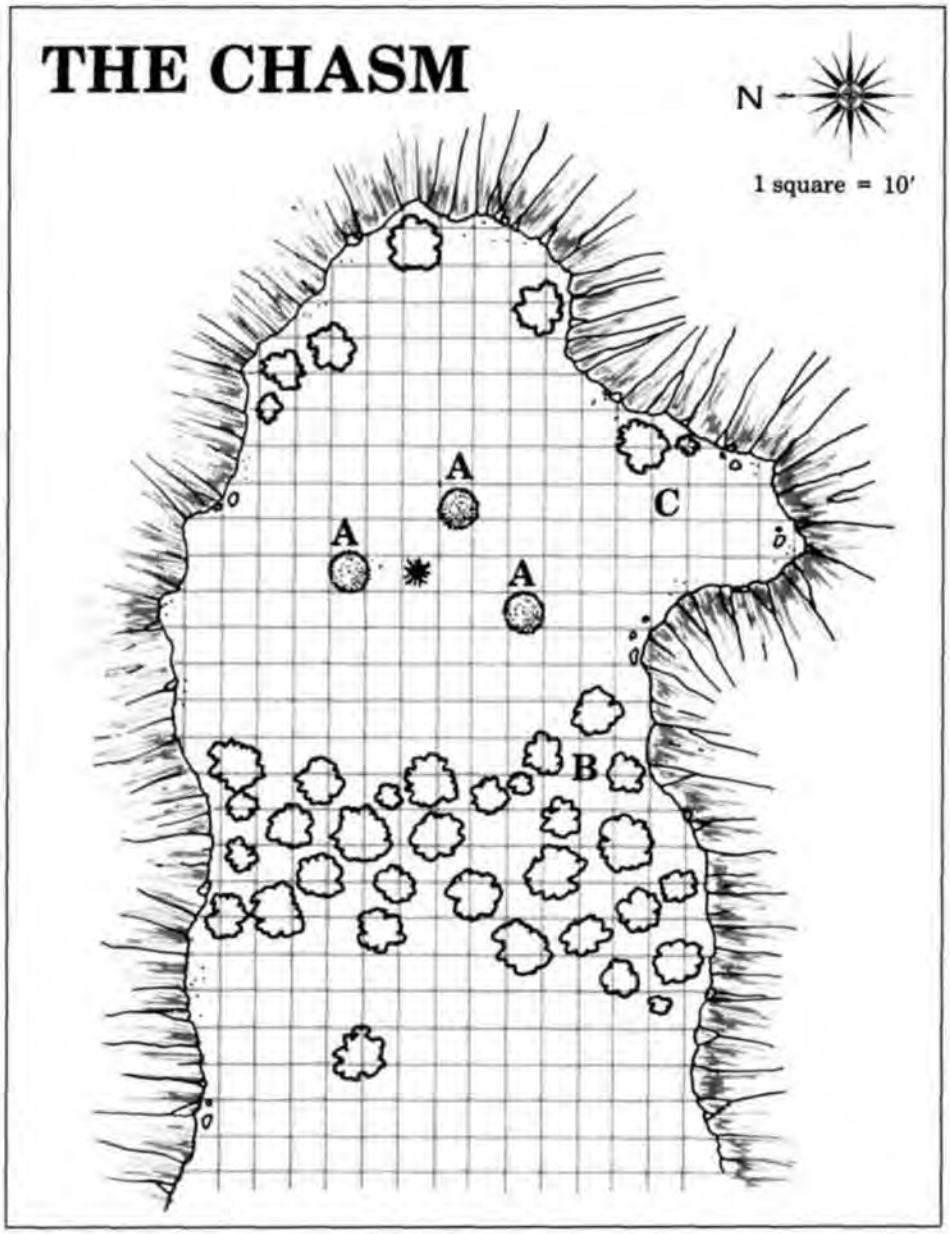
If a ranger is present and examines the ground in the surrounding area, he notices that at least six humanoids wearing boots have been in the area since early morning. The humanoids appear to have been fairly large ones, though not giant-size. If the PCs wish to search the area, read the following:

> Your search leads you down a side trail to the east. As you proceed down this path a short distance, you see that the unfortunate trapper behind you was not the only recent casualty. Four more bodies, dressed similarly to the first, are lying just off the trail. A fifth body can be seen about 100' farther along.

The nearest four bodies are similar to the first and have also been ransacked. All received sword wounds; one still grasps a bow, his free arm reaching over his shoulder toward a quiver of seven orange-feathered arrows at his back. The fifth body is that of an orc, an orange-feathered arrow protruding from its back. The orc is otherwise untouched, but possesses nothing of value and can be seen to be very thin, as if from starvation. No other weapons are present; all were taken.

A ranger who examines the area can see that at least a dozen humanoid creatures wearing boots have passed through. The make of the boots are orcish — but the weight of the creatures wearing the boots, evidenced after a brief examination, shows that the boot-wearers were much larger and heavier than orcs. A full turn of examination by a ranger reveals that the footprints were most likely made by large humanoids who marched several prisoners over to the road and slew them there, arranging the bodies afterward. (This is true; these tracks were made by Pastin's bugbears after he had supplied them with the orcish boots of their orc prisoners.)

Any PC proficient with a bow who examines the arrow in the orc may make an intelligence check. A successful roll reveals that the arrow is imbedded too deeply for a 100'-shot. The DM should not give the party this information if they do not ask specifically about the arrow or wound.



The tracks continue down the trail and turn into a narrow gorge. The prints are clearly made and easy to follow. A ranger or barbarian will notice that no attempt to cover the tracks was made.

After the Killers

If the party elects to follow the tracks, read the following:

> into a narrow canyon. The ground at the entrance to the chasm is very rocky and steep.

Horses have a difficult time climbing the slope up to the mouth of the canyon, and the PCs may wish to leave their mounts here, since it would take considerable time to get them up.

> 50' high and nearly perpendicular, except in a few places, and the ground is rocky. Even so, a few trees grow here and there along the perimeter, and the far end of the canyon is hidden from view by a copse of trees that stretches from one wall of the canyon to the other.

There is a 60% chance that the lead PC notices a large, humanoid figure disappearing into the copse just as he enters the canyon.

The Camp

If the PCs go to the end of the canyon and pass through the copse, they come upon a small camp:

> Hidden from view by the copse is a meager camp with only three ramshackle huts and a fire pit. Seated around the fire pit are at least a dozen orcs, who turn and stare at you for several seconds before they grab their weapons and attack.

Orcs (13): AC 7; MV 9"; HD 1; hp 7 (×3), 6 (×4), 5, 4 (×5); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type −1; AL LE; MM1/76; studded leather armor, one spear each. The orcs are gaunt, and the PCs may notice during the fight that they are not vicious and frenzied as orcs normally are in battle. These orcs have seen a score of their comrades perish at the hands of Pastin's victims and are convinced there is no way for them to survive. This attitude, coupled with their undernourished and maltreated condition, so affects their combat that they get a −1 on both "to hit" and damage rolls.

After three rounds of combat with the orcs, or if any of the PCs enter one of the huts (location A), 12 bugbears rush out and attack. Four normal bugbears with spears are hiding in each hut; they attack those PCs wearing the heaviest armor, leaving the other party members to Pastin and the remaining bugbears. The orcs continue to fight, but give the bugbears a wide berth.

One round after the bugbears from the huts attack, another dozen normal

bears, along with the illusionist Lopper, were hiding in the copse (at location B) under a *massmorph* spell cast by Pastin. The illusion disappears when the bugbears attack, most likely with surprise (1-4 on 1d6) since the PCs are engaging the other bugbears. At this point, each surviving orc who is not in combat with a PC leaves the fight, dropping all weapons and resting from exhaustion. Other orcs in combat fight at −2 to hit and damage, wearing out from the strain of the fight.

Lopper aids in the battle using offensive spells, including *color spray, fog cloud,* and *hypnotic pattern.* He casts *fog cloud* only if he sees Pastin doing so, per Pastin's orders. If any PC tries to attack Lopper, he casts an *invisibility* spell on himself and moves to another location to aid in the battle. If he sustains more than 8 hp damage he flees, covering his escape on a *phantom steed* with a *wall of fog.* If he does not have time to cast these spells, or if his escape is ruined, he drinks his potion of *gaseous form* and floats away on the wind.

Meanwhile Pastin, the bugbear chief, the leader, and the remaining four bugbears are watching the battle from location C on the canyon map. This group is under the cover of an *invisibility 10' radius* spell. If the party slays more than 10 bugbears from the huts, Pastin orders his four bugbears and the leader to join in the fray. He also casts a *continual light* spell on the most powerful-looking PC in an attempt to blind him.

Pastin employs his other spells effectively, using his *improved phantasmal force* spell to create the image of a growling bugbear throwing spears from one of the huts; the spears are directed at PCs who appear to be preparing spells. The spears hit as if hurled by an 8th-level illusionist. In the event that he himself is attacked, Pastin orders the bugbear chief to protect him while he casts a *chromatic orb* (paralysis) spell at his attacker.

If over half the bugbears are killed and the party still appears strong, Pastin casts a *fog cloud* spell in an attempt to drive them away. (The bugbears know about this spell and do not attempt to avoid it, thereby giving the party a clue that it is not a *cloudkill* spell.) If this ruse fails, Pastin uses his *ring of flying* to escape, leaving the remaining bugbears to the party. If the chief is killed in view of the other bugbears, if three-fourths of the bugbears are killed, or if Pastin escapes, the remaining bugbears flee at full speed, not even bothering to defend their backs. All surviving orcs also flee, avoiding the bugbears and illusionists.

After the battle is over, the PCs may examine the bodies. The bugbear tribe prospered after Pastin took it over, so the individual bugbears carry more than the usual amounts of treasure: 4-40 sp, 2-20 ep, and 3-24 gp each. The leader carries double that amount and a 50-gp bloodstone. The subchief carries a sack of 136 gp, 45 sp, and four 100-gp gems (two amethysts, a pearl, and a spinel). The chief wears three gold necklaces (each worth 500 gp), an ivory armband (worth 140 gp), and a platinum ring with a diamond (worth 750 gp). From his belt hangs a pouch containing five 200-gp gems, and 37 pp. His head is protected by a *helm of brilliance.* The chief does not know about the magical powers of this item, which appears to all investigation except a *detect magic* spell to be a partially damaged, grimy helmet. Its command word must be discovered by use of a *commune, contact other plane,* or *legend lore* spell.

If Lopper is slain or captured and searched, the PCs find he carries only 5 gp, but he also has a bracelet of wrought silver (worth 500 gp) and the magical items noted in "For the Dungeon Master." He carries nothing else except a dagger. If Pastin was defeated, the PCs find he possesses some magical items (as per "For the Dungeon Master"), a pouch of seven gems (three worth 100 gp, two worth 300 gp, and two worth 750 gp), a jade necklace (worth 1,500 gp), and 37 sp.

Concluding the Adventure

The DM may wish to set up an adventure for the party to seek out the bugbears' den, which lies four miles to the southeast. Although most of the males have been killed, the females and young still reside there. Due to the effects of the magical stream, the females fight as gnolls and the young as orcs. If neither Pastin nor Lopper escaped, all their spell books are present in the bugbear lair. A large assortment of treasure taken from the previous two adventuring bands can also be found here, but if any male bugbear escapes the battle, the lair is abandoned and the treasure gone within two days.

Also in the lair are eight more captured orcs and four mountain men, all on the verge of starvation. If the remaining bugbears abandon their lair, they take the prisoners with them for food during their journey to find a new home.

The PCs may also discover the magical water and attempt to trace it to its source. The water's effects may be some freak of nature, or the stream may be contaminated as it passes some magical edifice.

Finally, if Pastin survived, he will want revenge on the party, and will go out of his way to discover who they are and make life miserable for them. Lopper will be less vengeful, but may turn up later in another adventure.

New Magical Item

Ring of Flying

This magical ring looks exactly like any other magical ring. When worn, however, it allows the wearer and up to 600 lbs. of weight to *fly* at will, as per the third-level magic-user spell. The ring may be used for up to two cumulative hours of flight per day. If worn in flight past that limit, the ring ceases to function and the user immediately falls. One *feather fall* spell (cast at the 12th level of experience) may be used from this ring per day, in addition to the powers of flight; however, the wearer should note that the *feather fall* spell has a duration of 12 segments, slowing the wearer so that he falls only 144' during that time. Thus, this spell should only be called upon when the wearer is about to strike the ground, or else he will fall again when the spell's duration expires.

XP Value: 1,000 **GP Value:** 7,500 Ω

THE WERERATS OF RELFREN

BY GRANT BOUCHER AND WILLIAM KURT WENZ

The best laid schemes of rats and men . . .

Artwork by Paul Jaquays

Grant Boucher resides in Rockledge, Florida, and is finally making a living as a free-lance writer after graduating from the University of Florida last December. He is working extensively with West End Games' STAR WARS®: The Roleplaying Game. This is his fourth appearance in DUNGEON® Adventures, with "Ancient Blood" and "Out of the Ashes" accepted for publication in the future.

Kurt Wenz also resides in Rockledge and attends Brevard Community College. He is an active member of the Society for Creative Anachronism (Timeris chapter) and dabbles in philosophy and poetry. Kurt is preparing to move to California in the spring. This is his first appearance in DUNGEON Adventures.

"The Wererats of Relfren" is a D&D® Expert Set module for 4-8 characters of 3rd-6th level. As most of the monsters and characters exist in the AD&D® game as well, enterprising DMs can easily adapt this scenario if they desire. If this is done, the presence of spells such as *know alignment* or magical items such as a *wand of enemy detection* may give away the wererats' secret.

The town of Relfren should be placed along a relatively untraveled mountain pass in the campaign world, between two kingdoms. Conveniently, Relfren rarely appears on any major maps of the mountains since it has only recently become important. The pass on which Relfren lies is one of only two across the range, though it is not the better one, being longer and rougher.

The adventuring party should contain all human character classes, and at least one thief is recommended. Elves, dwarves, and halflings will find this adventure particularly dangerous, since many of the townspeople are infected with lycanthropy, a rare disease that kills demi-humans (D&D Basic Set *Dungeon Masters Rulebook*, page 33). See "On Wererats" for more information on the effects and progress of this disease.

Some places in this module call for Intelligence and Wisdom checks for PCs, which are made by rolling 1d20 to get the appropriate statistic or lower. Monster statistics include the D&D game book and page numbers for reference (BD: Basic Set *Dungeon Masters Rulebook*; ER: *Expert Rulebook*, CC: *Creature Catalogue*).

For the Dungeon Master

Fourteen months ago, some disreputable adventurers were exploring the tomb of a recently deceased baron when they were ambushed by a large pack of wererats. All the looters were slain except for the party thief, Jiles "Nimbletongue" Nogler. Badly wounded, the rogue fled and sought shelter in a nearby barn.

After a week of rest, Jiles was healed and ready to head out again. That night, however, under a beautiful full moon, Jiles turned into a strange version of lycanthrope: a greater wererat (see "On Wererats" for details). Retaining command of his senses, Jiles got an idea. He returned to the baron's tomb and used his quick wit and persuasive tongue to convince the normal wererats that there was more treasure to be gained under his leadership than could be found wandering around a graveyard. The wererats, never being the brightest or most organized of beasts, decide to follow their new comrade in search of adventure.

The strange troop traveled across the land disguised as "Marvelous Minster and his Rollicking Rats." During the day, they'd take in a few gold pieces with a legitimate carnival show, while at night they'd rob the nearest town blind with their unique combination of skills. By morning, they'd be gone. After a year of close calls, Jiles and the wererats decided that they'd played out their hand on the road and set about to find a newer, safer scam.

One of the troop's favorite snacks, Emerald Moon cheese, led the traveling show to the remote mountain town of Relfren, where Jiles received the inspiration for a plan. The troop passed quietly through the hamlet three weeks ago in human form, only to return later at night. The wererats then crept into the famous cheese factory and quickly disabled all of the guards. In the morning, they ambushed the owner and proprietor, a low-level magic-user named Grendel Orfman, infected him with lycanthropy, and held him and the injured guards captive within the factory for two weeks until all had turned into greater wererats. The guards and Grendel, never sociable, were not greatly missed.

Additionally, the local cleric, Father Thero, was ambushed and bitten (but released) while he was out at night only two weeks ago. He is unaware that a greater wererat bit him and instead thinks he escaped an attack by a bear (see area 19). About this same time, the wererats murdered a dwarven silversmithing family and an herbalist in town.

The chief constable for the town was badly bitten by a wererat when he stuck his hand through a slightly open but chained door at the Emerald Moon cheese factory a week ago; he believed the attacker was a guard dog and had his wound cured by Father Thero. The chief constable, Bert Camem, was reluctant to press charges because he felt getting bitten by someone's guard dog was his own fault — though he recalled that the Emerald Moon never had a guard dog before.

Grendel, now Chaotic, has become the "front" for the outfit. Through the use of his quick tongue and long-term association with the wererats, Jiles remains firmly in control of the band, and together Grendel and Jiles have set out to take over all of Relfren, hoping to establish a wererat thieves' guild there.

However, fate often has a hand at spoiling the best-laid plans of mice, men, and wererats. Mere days after the first phase of the takeover of Relfren, a bandit gang captured the only other pass through the mountains, cutting a major trade route. It will be months before imperial knights can make the route safe again. The once-untraveled pass wherein Relfren lies has now become the only route between two prosperous realms, and strangers of all kinds have been arriving steadily. Among those strangers is a party of young adventurers — the PCs.

The party's reasons for coming here are left up to the DM. It is suggested that this adventure occur while the PCs are on their way to another destination. The plot within Relfren can then develop around the party more naturally. The only local source of food and shelter along this route is the town of Relfren, so the stopover is a natural one.

Events in Relfren

The town of Relfren is a small hamlet similar to those found throughout the Swiss Alps in our own world. The people are friendly and welcome strangers, but avoid drastic change at any cost. They are all human unless noted otherwise.

Recently, a great many visitors have been passing through Relfren, and some strange things have happened. A dwarf and his family were killed two weeks ago when their silversmithy was robbed. Right after that, the herbalist's shop burned to the ground. Just the week before all that, the famous Emerald Moon cheese factory (the lifeblood of the town's economy) closed down, right before the big Founder's Day festival held every year at this time. A sign on the door promises "something special" is planned by the owners, but the townspeople aren't known for their enjoyment of surprises. The festival is now only two days away. Anyone will relate the above information to PCs in conversation if the PCs are friendly and well-mannered.

The town is very small, with perhaps only 100 or so true residents, not including travelers and peddlers. The party is unable to purchase anything unusual (see area 11). The merchants here prefer bartering for goods, since gold is almost useless among friends. The DM should allow a 10% discount on all goods and services bartered for, as opposed to paid for in cash. Also, all merchants raise their prices 25% for obvious newcomers but are thereafter subject to normal bargaining.

The events within Relfren follow chronologically. The DM should use the following information to unfold the plot for the PCs, allowing them complete freedom within the town otherwise. The DM can change the time the party is allowed to complete the mission (three days), depending on the skill of the players and the amount of role-playing involved. The DM has been given great latitude in how to role-play certain citizens of Relfren, and many buildings remain open for an ambitious DM to show his own creativity.

Morning, Day 1. The PCs should arrive in Relfren early one morning. As they enter the town, they see a huge banner welcoming them to Relfren, "Home of the Realm's Finest Cheese," and advertising the town's Founder's Day celebration two days from now. The PCs may spend the rest of the morning exploring the town, stabling their horses (area 23), getting a room for the night (areas 1 or 22), and meeting people. They will likely read the reward notice (area 3) about the dwarves' deaths and meet the blacksmith (area 13) for more information.

Afternoon, Day 1. Some time in the afternoon, while the party is near the stables (area 23), six hippogriffs from the mountains attack the horses. The party should be within range to hear the disturbance and aid in the fight. Since hippogriffs prefer horse flesh, they attack humans only if they themselves are attacked. If three or more are slain, the survivors flee.

Hippogriffs (6): AC 5; HD 3 + 1; hp 14 each; MV 180'(60')/360'(120'); #AT 2 claws/1 bite; Dmg 1-6/1-6/1-10; Save F2; ML 8; AL N; ER/51.

The blacksmith (area 13) also arrives, as does Chief Constable Camem (from area 17, but on patrol). The burgomaster (area 10) arrives after the menace has been dealt with, proclaiming it a "dark day for Relfren" and praising the efforts of the town's heroes (notably ignoring the party's important contribution). This event should help to establish a friendship between the party and the blacksmith, and he mentions the reward for information on the dwarves' deaths if the PCs haven't already asked about it.

Constable Camem sticks up for the PCs and thanks them extensively for their help. This friendship is in stark contrast to his position on day 2, after the constable turns into a greater wererat and joins the plot.

So far, only Grendel Orfman and the factory guards (area 4), Constable Camem, and Father Thero (area 19) have been infected with lycanthropy. All but Camem and Father Thero are full lycanthropes. Camem will become a lycanthrope in the evening of this day, and Father Thero will become one at midnight on day 3, at the height of the festival.

As mentioned in the section "On Wererats" at the end of this adventure, human wererats are known as greater wererats and retain their normal hit points when in animal form, otherwise having the same statistics as do normal wererats. They usually attack while in human form to allow use of their weapons and magical items. All normal wererats in Relfren usually remain in man-sized rat form. Astute PCs will attack the largest rats (the wererats) and humans (greater wererats) first in any battle.

Evening, Day 1. This evening, while the town sleeps, Chief Constable Bert Camem gives in to his lycanthropy infection, turns into a greater wererat, and joins the evil plot as he seeks out the other rats and wererats at the Emerald Moon cheese factory (he can smell them easily).

Midnight, Day 1. The Silver Crescent Inn (area 22) is sabotaged. The support posts beneath the building are cut through, and the entire structure comes crashing down into ruin. Those within take 8d6 hp damage. Allow any NPCs who normally live or work at the inn a 25% chance to be out of the structure during the accident. The elven innkeepers, however, die immediately in the collapse. The DM may reduce damage to any PCs if it is necessary to ensure their survival, though a minimum of 8 hp damage should be given to each.

Any PC who makes an Intelligence check while examining the ruins realizes that the beams were chewed through by huge teeth rather than by blades or saws. Since the constable is now part of the conspiracy, he dismisses any attempts by the party to prove sabotage or to investigate the matter further.

If any PCs are in the vicinity of the inn just after midnight (out searching for clues to the dwarves' murders or alerted by the noise of the inn's collapse), they are asked to come down to the station for questioning. The DM should refer to the events detailed in "Early Morning, Day 2").

The sabotaging of this elven-owned inn was accomplished by the wererats, since they want all demi-humans to leave the town but can't kill them outright so soon after the murder of the dwarves. Only one or two other demi-humans now live in town (and may be developed by the DM as desired, though they do not play a major part in the adventure).

Early Morning, Day 2. If the PCs have spent the night at the Lazy Cat Inn, they are awakened by one of the townspeople, who informs them that Constable Camem wishes to see them at the guard station (area 17) immediately. If the PCs have spent the night at the Silver Crescent Inn, see area 22.

When the PCs arrive at the station, the guard on duty asks them to leave their weapons and spell components at the door, where they will be guarded at all times. If the PCs refuse, the chief constable comes out and assures them of the safety of their items.

Once inside, Camem leads the party members past the cells, remarking that his private office is beyond. Once inside the cell block, he informs the PCs that they are under arrest for sabotaging the Silver Crescent Inn and for the murder of the elves who died in the disaster. If the party tries to resist, the constable draws his sword and warns about resisting arrest. If the party persists in attacking (Lawful PCs should be checked carefully on this), Constable Camem calls for help, and the other guard in the station runs out to summon 2-20 townspeople, who arrive armed with clubs and daggers in 2-8 rounds. If the PCs refuse the constable's summons entirely, this same group is sent out to hunt them down with Camem's help.

Townspeople (2-20): AC 9; HD 1; hp 3-6; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1 weapon; Dmg by weapon type; Save Normal Human; ML 6; AL L or N each; 50% have clubs, 50% have daggers; BD/34.

The PCs are safer if they give up, since they will need their strength for later. If they spend the rest of the day in jail, they can quietly discuss the situation and their plans for escape. Of course, if any PCs manage to escape the jail, either through trickery or by killing the guards, the DM should mobilize the entire town to hunt them down. Since Relfren is populated by peaceful folk, the escapees should have an easy time leaving town if they hurry. However, since everybody knows everybody here, the PCs will not be able to find safety anywhere in town, except for the church (area 20), the blacksmith's shop (area 13), and the burgomaster's house (area 10). The blacksmith and the burgomaster will hide the party safely, but the PCs will be secure only until nightfall at the church (see area 19 and 20). If they are recaptured, the PCs are bound, gagged, and returned to the jail. If they attempt another escape, the PCs must flee the town completely or disable all their pursuers.

Evening, Day 2. If any party members are incarcerated, the blacksmith and the burgomaster enter the jail and release them (returning their weapons and possessions) while the guard station is mysteriously unattended. The PCs are taken in secrecy to the burgomaster's home (area 10) and hidden in the basement, where they are told to lay low for a while.

The two rescuers mention the following tidbits of information (or the PCs may hear them later, depending on the DM's preference and the party's skill):

— Many of the townspeople are saying that the death of the elves proves something is fishy in Relfren. Investigation of the debris of the inn might turn up some clues, but Constable Camem has ordered everyone to stay away from the area.

— Public opinion is on the party's side. Their help in dealing with the hippogriffs proves that the PCs are not criminals, and the constable is acting very strangely by arresting people with no apparent evidence (Constable Camem was not very popular before all this happened, anyway).

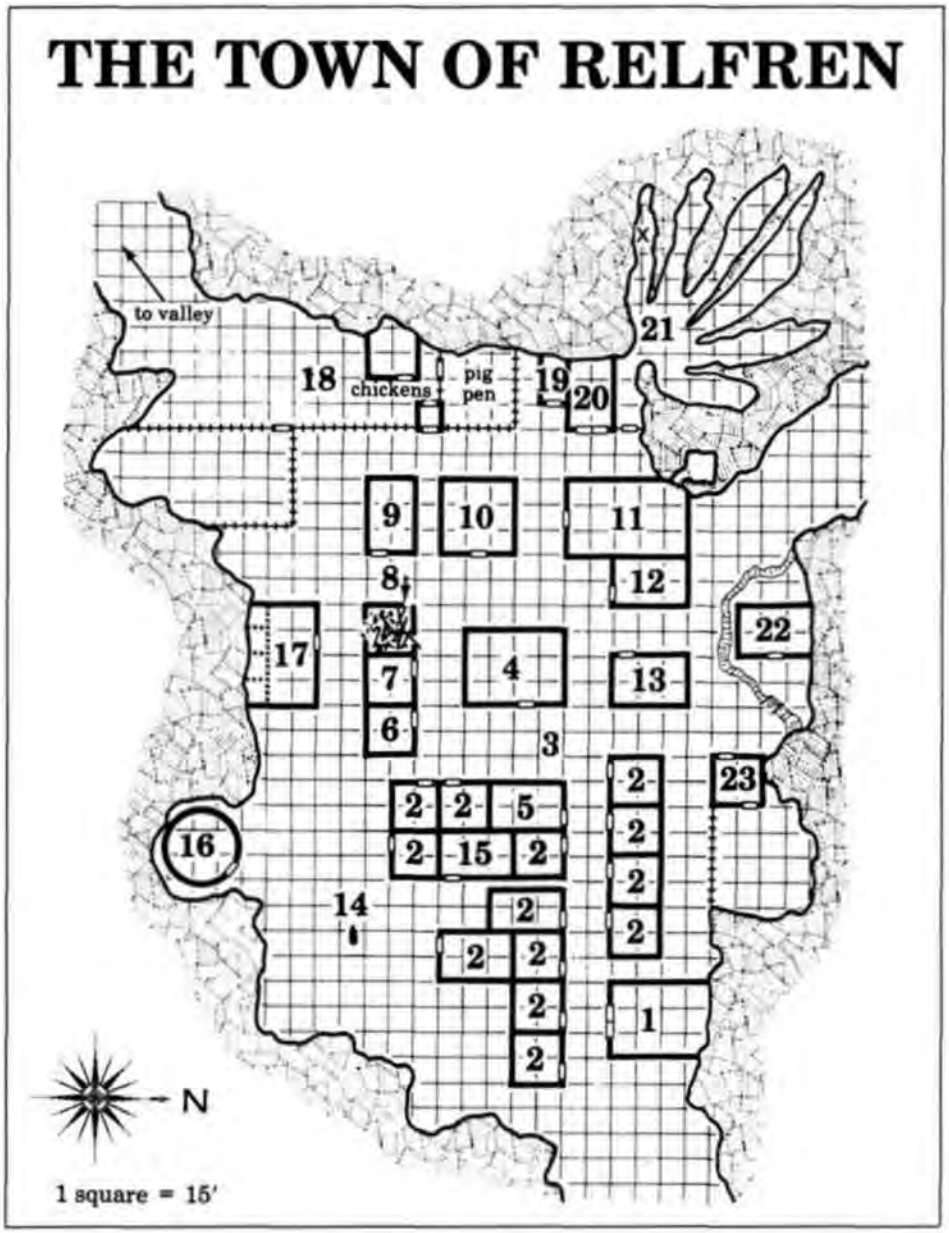
— The graveyard has been locked by Father Thero, who is no longer as friendly and open as he once was. The last bodies to be buried in the graveyard were those of the murdered dwarves and the herbalist.

— The herbalist's shop (area 8) burned down recently, and although this was also thought to be an accident, recent events raise new suspicions. Why would someone want to kill a friendly herbalist?

— The herbalist's best customer was a reclusive wizard who lives in a tower on the southeast edge of town (area 16).

Meanwhile, unknown to the PCs, five entire families are bitten by wererats infesting their homes this night. The DM should choose randomly among the many normal houses (areas 2). These people do not actually turn into greater wererats, however, until the following evening (see "Midnight, Day 3"). The normal delay of 2-24 days for lycanthropy to set in is greatly shortened by the presence of a full moon at that time. Those bitten were attacked in darkness and believe they were set upon by either roaming dogs, big rats, or both.

Day 3. Despite the troubled night, the day-long celebration of the town's founding is held today. Everyone is supposed to wear a costume all day, and part of the fun is to see who correctly guesses the identity of the most people. At midnight, the masks are removed in a ceremony at the town square. Grendel Orfman, proprietor of the Emerald Moon cheese factory, has promised "something special" for the festivities and has been very secretive of late. The presence of a full moon this night is considered very lucky for all.



The burgomaster suggests that the PCs wear some of his old costumes (DM's creativity required here) in order to conceal their investigations. The guardsmen will no doubt be searching for the party all day and will have the routes out of town guarded at all times. Therefore, the safest place for the PCs to be is out in the open where they can move about freely. Allow PCs to come up with their own costumes if they wish, providing the supplies are readily accessible within the town. A PC with the nonweapon proficiency of disguise can be most useful here.

The day is filled with eating and drinking contests as well as games of chance and skill. The most important aspect of the costume game is that each person gets to ask for one clue to the identity of the disguised. The clue can be as simple as "not the butcher, not the baker" (for the candle maker of area 6) or else can be much harder. The PCs are harassed constantly by well-meaning citizens and should come up with suitable clues of their own — misleading clues, of course. Opting to pretend to be legitimate citizens of the town is possible, of course, but such PCs might acci-

dentally run into the real people they are impersonating (who are also in disguise). The DM should put the party through some hair-raising ordeals with these questions, but should allow the PCs the chance to goof a few (the citizens of Relfren aren't all that bright, after all).

Example: Young Karen Qwen (area 7) is wearing a princess costume, complete with domino mask, long blonde hair, and a paste-jewel crown. All the young single men of the town are looking for her as part of a bet. A few of them have flattered the town seamstresses (area 9) into telling the details of Karen's costume. The first man who believes he's found Karen runs off to claim victory, collecting a substantial prize of 10 gp if he can prove his success. If a party member (male or female) attempts to impersonate the baker, the young men will no doubt find out quickly, if the disguised PC does not take care to retain his or her own mask.

Midnight, Day 3. Beneath a bright, full moon, the entire town gathers outside the Emerald Moon cheese factory (area 4) to wait for the great unmasking and surprise. If the party has not dealt with the wererats, Grendel Orfman appears on the factory steps wearing a skull mask. He announces the "great surprise" — and the unmasking reveals the true spread of the lycanthropy as the townspeople pull off their masks, revealing scores of horrible furry little faces. As the wererats, greater wererats, and giant rats pour out from the factory, the town is in chaos as panic breaks out among the populace. The normal townspeople are either killed or knocked unconscious (and infected). The PCs are in great trouble if they remain in the town. If they flee, they can always come back, but they will find it hard to convince anyone else what they saw was real.

If, before midnight, the party has killed the wererats or forced them to flee, the burgomaster announces that the great surprise is "free cheese for everybody" (a weak idea, but his best try) and opens the cheese factory. An astute politician, the burgomaster informs the PCs that revealing the recently foiled plot is unwise at this time, and their heroism goes unheralded for now. See "Concluding the Adventure" for more on how to wrap up this scenario.

The Town of Relfren

1. The Lazy Cat Inn. This rat-infested inn and tavern remains in business because of unknowing travelers and cheap food (not always what it's claimed to be) and drink (watered down, of course). The owner and proprietor is a one-eyed, obnoxious army veteran named Thegor Hustimar.

Thegor has four double rooms to rent at only 2 sp per night. He rarely cleans these drafty rooms, and PCs have a 5% chance each night to catch a bad cold (lower all statistics, attacks, and skill checks by one point for two weeks).

Food at the Lazy Cat Inn is often made from rats, the ale is always watered down, and the baked goods are always stale. Prices are about half the usual for the campaign (e.g., two dozen pastries for a gold piece, instead of one dozen).

The place is infested with 3-30 **normal rats** (see "On Wererats" for their statistics). If asked, Thegor explains, "Tiger has one injured leg and cannot chase them." Actually, Tiger, a white domestic cat, never has chased the rats and mice around here, even when he was in his prime. In fact, Tiger is afraid of anything that moves. He spends all his time sleeping on his own chair in the tavern area, above floor level where the rats can't get him.

If the PCs choose to stay here and they have made their intentions clear to Jiles and the wererats (area 4), the party might be attacked by rats during the night (DM's discretion). See area 4 for more on the attack methods employed by Jiles and his furry little fiends.

Thegor Hustimar: AC 9; HD 1; hp 5; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1 short sword; Dmg by weapon type; Save Normal Man; ML 6; AL N.

Tiger, domestic cat: AC 7; HD ½; hp 3; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1 bite; Dmg 1-2; Save Normal Man; ML 4; AL N; SA surprise 1-4.

2. Normal Houses. Each of these houses contains at least one generation (1-4 adults and 0-5 children) of normal citizens. All of the men and women are trained as town guards and take shifts guarding their loved ones. They have little or no treasure, since they trade with each other for most goods and services.

A normal house has a 20% chance of having 1-8 **normal rats** within it (see "On Wererats" for their statistics). These rats steal food and trinkets but will not attack anyone until midnight on day 3, at the orders of the wererats and greater wererats at the Emerald Moon cheese factory (area 4).

Normal citizens: AC 9; HD 1; hp 1-6; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1 weapon; Dmg by weapon type; Save Normal Man; ML 6; AL N.

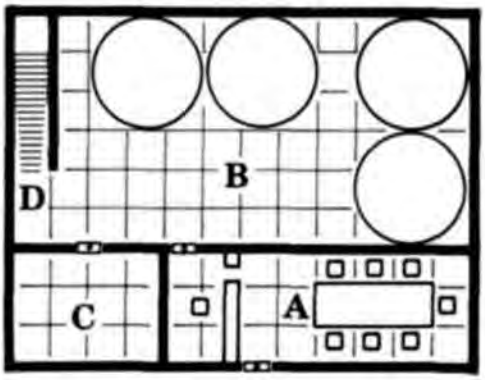
3. Town Square. The party sees notices posted all over the town square, each offering a reward of 1,000 gp for any information leading to the arrest of the person or persons responsible for the murder of a family of dwarves (silversmiths by trade). The reward is offered by the local blacksmith (area 13). This much gold is considered a fantastic sum locally, but the murders of the dwarves were far more shocking.

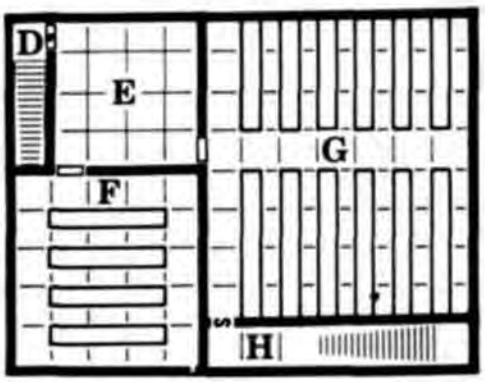
The town's main well is located in the eastern portion of the square. During the day, scores of people mill about the various shops around the square, getting water and talking about the upcoming festival and the recent troubles in town. It is here in the town square that most of the Founder's Day festivities and contests take place, including the "great unmasking" (see "Midnight, Day 3").

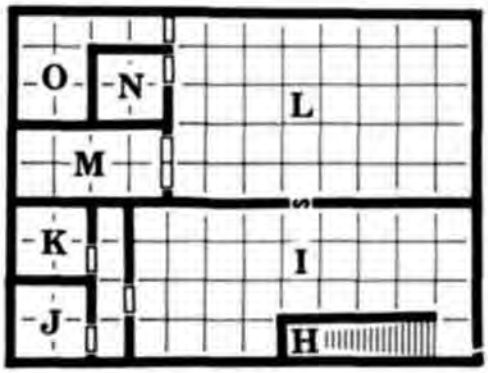
4. The Emerald Moon Cheese Factory. Both physically and figuratively, the Emerald Moon cheese factory stands at the heart of Relfren. The town sprang up around this three-story building founded by Relfren Orfman (the great-grandfather of the current owner). His strange choice of green-colored cheese with holes in it has become one of the best-loved cheeses in the realm. The refusal of the owners to expand the operation has only increased the value and demand for the now-chic cheese. But now the windows have been shuttered, and a large sign on the door reads:

ATTENTION! ATTENTION!
IN HONOR OF THE UPCOMING FOUNDER'S DAY FESTIVITIES, THE OWNER AND MANAGERS OF THE EMERALD MOON CHEESE FACTORY WOULD LIKE TO OFFER A SPECIAL SURPRISE TO THE GOOD PEOPLE OF RELFREN. AT MIDNIGHT OF FESTIVAL DAY, ALL WILL BE REVEALED. UNTIL THAT MOMENTOUS DAY, HOWEVER, THE SHOP WILL BE CLOSED IN ORDER TO INSURE SECURITY. (WOULDN'T WANT TO SPOIL THE SURPRISE, NOW, WOULD WE?)
THE MANAGEMENT

EMERALD MOON CHEESE FACTORY
Area 4







1 square = 5'

All windows within the building are shuttered and barred from within. PCs will have to break the shutters and bend the bars to get in this way (likely making too much noise). Locked doors can be picked normally.

All rooms within the building are lit with *continual light* spells cast upon normal torch sconces. A small black cloth cover hangs on a chain beside each sconce and can be placed over the light to darken the room. The rooms are heated and cooled through similar magicks involving "heater blocks."

4A. Main Office. The front door (always locked these days) opens into the only part of the factory most people ever see, the front office. Numerous chairs are placed against the walls for the comfort of waiting patrons and businessmen, while a small table is usually kept supplied with samples of cheese to whet their appetites. Behind a counter to the south is a padded chair, an empty strongbox, and a door to the vat room (area 4B).

Grendel Orfman (see area 4L) used to serve all customers personally, just to keep himself busy, but hasn't continued the practice since he became a greater wererat and closed the factory. Now, only the four **greater wererat** factory guards (F2; hp 15 each; #AT 1 long sword; Dmg by weapon type; Save F2; ML 10) and their eight **normal rat** pets (see "On Wererats" for their statistics) remain on this level. Each of these four men has an equal chance of being in this room or the vat room (area 4B); roll randomly for each turn as they patrol. The guards do not ascend the stairs to the second floor unless in pursuit of intruders. Each of the guards carries a key which opens all the doors on this level only. The table in the waiting room has no samples left on it (just crumbs), and there is no treasure in this room. The door to area 4B is locked.

The guards will order their rats to attack any one person who looks like a spell-caster in preference to any other character type. None of the guards wear armor, allowing themselves the chance to turn into rat form if necessary.

4B. Vat Room. There are four huge vats of milk being slowly turned to curd in here. The vats are magically heated (through a spell cast by the founding father), and the temperature is adjustable with the use of a graduated lever on each vat. A set of stairs going up (area 4D) is visible to the south, and another door opens to the southeast into area 4C. There is no treasure in this room, but the DM should note the chances for the guards described in area 4A to be here.

4C. First Floor Storeroom. The metal door to this room is locked with both a combination lock and a key lock. The guards (area 4A) have keys to open the latter lock, but only Grendel knows the combination to the former. Three successful *open locks* rolls or a single *knock* spell will undo the combination and open the vault, once the key lock has been taken care of.

Within this room are the carefully protected jars of starter culture used to turn the milk into cheese. There are also various tools and equipment used for repairing the vats and stirring the milk. All of the discarded armor from the greater wererat guards is also here.

Seven large jars contain a thick, dark-green fluid. This is a highly concen-

trated food dye used to turn the cheese green. A small drop will color an entire vat of milk, so if a party member decides to see whether the harmless fluid has any magical properties, the unfortunate imbiber will actually turn green as the fluid courses through his system. It takes two weeks for the effect to wear off entirely, but the PC looks merely deathly ill after one week.

The dye is only slightly valuable (100 gp per jar) compared to the cheese starter, which will fetch 3,000 gp on the black market of a major city.

4D. Trapped Lower Stairway. These wooden stairs lead from the vat room (area 4B) to the doorway outside the press room (area 4E) on the second floor. Every third step has been deliberately weakened and will break if more than 50 lbs. is placed upon it. Falling PCs land on spikes for 4-24 hp damage and must find some way to get out of the narrow enclosure.

Astute PCs who specifically say they are examining the stairs get an Intelligence check to notice that the trapped stairs are strangely unworn in contrast to the stairs above and below them. All greater and normal wererats, of course, know about the trapped stairs and are careful to avoid them.

4E. Pressing Room. The only keys to this locked door are carried by Grendel (area 4L) and Jiles (area 4K). Inside are a dozen short wood golems made by the founding father of the factory, a wizard of far greater skill than any of his descendants. The golems' hands are huge round discs, specifically designed to press the cheese. These fists do 2-12 hp damage (instead of the regular 1-8 hp) when used as weapons, but the golems are clumsy and have a −2 to hit.

The golems obey the commands of anyone who openly presents a special *emerald moon ring* (currently worn by Grendel Orfman) upon entering. They attack all other manlike intruders. This ring was fashioned at the time of the golems' construction and enables its wearer to command them. The golems will under no circumstances leave the factory grounds (they become demagicked if removed) and won't attack animals, insects, etc. (including rat-form wererats) unless ordered to do so.

There is no other treasure in this room. An unlocked door to the north leads to area 4G, and an identical door to the east leads to area 4F.

Wood golems (12): AC 7; HD 2+2; hp 11 each; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1 huge flat fist; Dmg 2-12; Save F1; ML 12; AL N; SD can be hit only by magical weapons, immune to *sleep, charm, hold,* and *magic missile* spells as well as all cold, missile fire, and gases; −2 to hit; −1 to initiative; −2 to save against fiery attacks and +1 hp/HD damage from fire; ER/50.

4F. Second Floor Storeroom. Racks upon racks of cheese wheels line this chamber. Many rows of them have fallen to the floor and are currently being nibbled on by 10 **giant rats** and six **wererats** (see "On Wererats" for their statistics). These creatures watch the PCs fight the golems in area 4E and wait for them to enter here before attacking. The wererats are smart and remain in man-sized rat form while attacking. Since the wererats are larger than the giant rats, the party should be able to single out the lycanthropes if they know to look for them. The DM should maintain a secret check to see which of the bites on party members are from giant rats and which are from wererats. At some later time, perhaps even after the adventure is over, the DM should roll secretly to see which party members become wererats and how soon.

PCs who take 50% or more of their hit points in damage from the wererats become lycanthropes and eventually become NPCs under the DM's control, as discussed in the section "On Wererats," unless they somehow overcome these effects.

The wheels of cheese weigh 100 lbs. each and are worth 200 gp each.

4G. Curing Room. The wheels of cheese are aged in this large room before being sold or placed in the storeroom. Fourteen more **giant rats** and two more **wererats** are resting behind and beneath the shelves. See "On Wererats" for their statistics and area 4F for details on combat.

There is no treasure in here except the partially aged cheese. A secret door in the east wall leads to a hidden staircase (area 4H).

4H. Secret Staircase. This staircase is hidden behind the east wall of area 4G and connects area 4G to area 4I.

4I. Foyer. The stairs lead up to a small foyer with fine carpets on the floor and paintings on the walls. The carpets are worth 5 gp per square foot; the paintings depict the current and three former owners of the Emerald Moon cheese factory and are worthless.

Behind the picture of the current owner, Grendel Orfman, is a secret door to his private quarters (area 4L). An area of black in the lower left of the picture is actually only black gauze and allows anyone in area 4L to see into this room, provided the lights are dimmed in the bedroom and lit in the foyer (as they are upon the party's arrival).

An open door to the south leads to the guest apartments (areas 4J and 4K). There is no other treasure in this room.

4J. Wererat Guest Room. Eight more **wererats** (see "On Wererats" for statistics) are lounging around in here, although these are currently in human form. They immediately grab their swords and attack the party, hoping to draw the PCs into the room. The wererats scream loudly in battle, bringing Jiles from area 4K and alerting Grendel in area 4L.

The wererats have no treasure on their persons but are guarding their cut of the band's recent exploits, cheesy as it may be. In a large sack under the floorboards are 1,803 gp and 140 pp. For obvious reasons, wererats won't accept payment in silver.

4K. Thief Guest Room. Jiles Nogler, professional thief and now greater wererat extraordinaire, resides here. If the PCs enter this room before investigating area 4J, they have normal chances to surprise Jiles. But if the party attacks the wererats in area 4J first, Jiles sneaks up behind the PCs and joins Grendel in attacking the party's rear if the group is small or appears weak; otherwise, he flees to make hit and run attacks on the group's stragglers.

Jiles has accumulated little wealth in his latest criminal escapades but is eagerly awaiting the takeover of the entire town (see "Midnight, Day 3"), when he can start exacting taxes of visitors, extorting protection money, and expecting regular tribute from his mousy followers.

In a chest beneath his bed are 3,340 gp, 1,098 pp, and six gold necklaces worth 200 gp each. The locked chest is

also trapped with a scything blade which does 3-18 hp damage if not disarmed.

Jiles "Nimbletongue" Nogler: AC 4 (2 in rat form); T8; hp 30; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1 *long sword +2, charm person;* Dmg by weapon type; Save T8; ML 9; AL C; S 12, I 14, W 10, D 16, C 12, Ch 18; SD immune to normal weapons in rat form due to lycanthropy; *ring of protection +3, rope of climbing,* potion of *invisibility*. Jiles is perhaps the most charismatic and smooth-talking wererat alive, always maintaining his calm and keeping his wits about him. Through sheer force of personality, he keeps his Chaotic allies and underlings welded together as a team. He will easily adapt to any situation, lying and making deals naturally and well.

4L. Main Bedroom. Within this luxurious bedroom rests Grendel Orfman, current owner of the Emerald Moon cheese factory, self-proclaimed brains of the takeover, and newly converted greater wererat wizard.

Grendel has nowhere near the talent his forefathers had for magic and has only barely managed to keep control of the golems in area 4E through the use of the *emerald moon ring* crafted long ago. He is basically a coward and attacks the PCs only when the odds are in his favor. If surprised in his chambers, Grendel pulls the old "thanks for rescuing me from the evil rat-men" trick, in which he offers the PCs plenty of cheese in return for the removal of the wererats, who he claims have held him against his will. Any PCs who believe that one deserve to be fooled. If hard pressed, Grendel locks himself in the bathroom (area 4O) and tries to escape through the window.

There is no treasure in here, but the furnishings are quite valuable and some are even enchanted (pillows that are always fluffy, sheets that remain magically clean, an ever-full water glass, a dresser that sorts clothing, etc.). The DM is free to be as creative as possible here.

Grendel Orfman: AC 8 (6 in rat form); MU6; hp 20; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1 *dagger +1;* Dmg by spell or weapon type; Save MU6; ML 8; AL C; S 9, I 16, W 10, D 15, C 10, Ch 12; SA spells; SD immune to normal weapons in rat form due to lycanthropy; spells: *magic missile, protection from good, sleep, detect invisibility, mirror image, fire ball, hold person;* magical items: potion of *speed, emerald moon ring,* potion of *flying*.

Should the PCs cure Grendel of his lycanthropy, he claims that the disease made him insane and promises to return the factory to its previous glory. Grendel remains an upstanding citizen until the next scam comes to town. Though not an evil person, Grendel was very self-centered and grasping before he became a wererat (the disease only made him much worse; see area 4M).

4M. Walk-In Closet. This appears at first glance to be just a huge closet filled with clothes of many different colors, but many of the robes seem to be padded with something. The padding consists of cloth wrapped around platinum coins, which is how Grendel keeps the family fortune safe. All told, there is about 10,000 gp worth of platinum in the wardrobe. Those PCs searching the closet notice the heavy lining if they each make an Intelligence check.

The DM may wish to drop little rumors about Grendel if the party asks about him in town. These could include "he's put on some weight recently" and "perhaps he's been sampling his own

wares again." Though a coward, Grendel got a perverse pleasure from wearing his coin-stuffed clothing and knowing he had more money on his person than the townspeople would see in their lifetimes. He plans to do this again after the town has been taken over.

4N. Third Floor Storeroom. This room contains miscellaneous odds and ends like spare sheets and linens. There is nothing of any real value here.

4O. Lavatory and Bath. This is a magical bathroom, with hot and cold running water from pipes that end at the walls and a flush toilet — even a shower is present. Like all the magical devices in this house, these were made with special spells by the great wizard Relfren Orfman many years ago.

5. Meltle's Tavern and Spirit Shop. This is the source of all the ale, wine, and mead the town drinks. The other inns and taverns all purchase their supplies from the tavern's owner, Frederick Meltle. Frederick is a middle-aged, fair-haired bachelor who, for most of his life, kept the books for his brother's distillery business. Some years ago, he retired to Relfren in search of peace and quiet. Still keeping contact with the old business, Frederick brings in a shipment of spirits every two months (a day celebrated throughout the town).

Frederick sells every kind of drink (except his ales) to the other businesses in town, at a price low enough to insure their profits but keep his competition to a minimum. He stocks over 100 brands of ale (both bottled and on tap) in his establishment, and it is the only place for miles around with such a collection. His place is a true tavern — no food, no frills, just a long counter lined with men and women letting go after a hard day's work. Most of the news of the town is distributed here, and a bulletin board always has the latest messages.

Frederick is relatively wealthy but puts most of his profits into importing newer and rarer ales (his personal hobby). Being one of the brightest of the townspeople, Frederick helps Miss Killian (the general store owner, area 11) balance her books. Rumor has it they've become very close friends.

Frederick Meltle: AC 9; HD 1; hp 5; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1 long sword; Dmg by weapon type; Save Normal Man; ML 6; AL N; S 14, I 17, W 10, D 12, C 12, Ch 14.

6. The Lamb and Candle. This little shop is owned and operated by two very aged people, Donam and Sara Borke. Donam has been the town's butcher for over 50 years, and his wife is a candlemaker. Because Donam's hearing is poor, the PCs will have difficulty making themselves understood. For example, if they address him as "Mr. Borke," he hands them a few chops and starts talking about the high quality of the pigs he slaughters. His wife has normal hearing but has difficulty moving about and remains in the back of the shop, cutting wicks and dipping candles. His meat and her candles are indeed of good quality, and the Borkes are quite friendly once the PCs manage to get through to them; pointing out a sample in the display case is usually sufficient.

Donam Borke gets live animals from the valley (area 18) and slaughters them in the basement of the little shop. The old couple have no treasure.

Donam Borke: AC 9; HD 1; hp 4; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1 large meat cleaver; Dmg 1-6; Save Normal Man; ML 6; AL L; S 16; I 13, W 14, D 12, C 14, Ch 13.

Sara Borke: AC 9; HD 1; hp 3; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1 sharp scissors; Dmg 1-3; Save Normal Man; ML 6; AL L; S 8, I 14, W 14, D 10, C 13, Ch 10.

7. Karen's Bakery. A friendly 16-year-old girl, Karen Qwen, is currently the chief baker for this little town. Her parents trained her well and wrote down all the family recipes before their deaths some four years ago. For over three years, the young businesswoman lived with the Borkes next door (area 6), but recently she was deemed old enough to live on her own by the town council. Her baked goods are fantastic creations, the main taste treats to be found in the town.

Recently, Karen had a great scare when the herbalist's shop next door (area 8) burned down. Only the perseverance of the townspeople saved her bakery.

Karen doesn't know anything about the plot in town, but she knows that the herbalist never left a fire going at night (as the constable maintains). She also knows that the herbalist had a pet dog, who has been seen wandering about town recently (see area 14).

Karen Qwen: AC 7; HD 1; hp 5; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1 cutting knife; Dmg 1-4; Save Normal Man; ML 6; AL L; S 12, I 16, W 14, D 17, C 14, Ch 16.

8. Herbalist. The recent destruction of this shop was attributed to an accident. ("The herbalist left a fire going and fell asleep" is the official version.) Since the herbalist was a peaceful man who had no known enemies, and also because he didn't live long enough to defend himself, the accidental fire theory has been accepted by the naive townspeople.

What the citizens of Relfren don't know is that the wererats killed the herbalist and burned down his shop because they believed him to be the only source of wolfsbane in town. What the wererats don't know is that the herbalist had just delivered his entire supply of wolfsbane to the wizard of the tower (area 16) the day before the fire.

The party can tell only that the blaze was deliberately set. All records and supplies were utterly consumed in the inferno. The herbalist's pet dog, Fritz, can be found at area 14. The herbalist's body lies in the catacombs of area 21.

9. The Two Sisters Clothing Shop. Two twin sisters, Nitty and Bitty Bunkin, make cloth and various articles of clothing. They also import leather goods, like shoes, for the citizens. The sisters have no knowledge of any of the plots going on in town, but they do have a good idea of everybody's costumes for the festival, since they've made bits and pieces and sold the cloth and the patterns. If asked about Grendel Orfman, they say only that "things must be getting lean for him, since he's been asking about how to do his own sewing repairs" (Grendel's been sewing his treasure into his wardrobe; see area 4M).

The women always consult with each other about their fees. Nitty charges 10% too high, Bitty 10% too low. Listening to them try to agree on a price can be quite entertaining. They always wear matching dresses and have a good time confusing newcomers to the town.

Nitty and Bitty Bunkin, twins: AC 8; HD 1; hp 5; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1 knitting needle each; Dmg 1-2 each; Save Normal Man; ML 6; AL L; S 10, I 12, W 11, D 14, C 12, Ch 10.

10. Burgomaster's House. This is the nicest house in Relfren. To date, the burgomaster (no one knows his real

name) has been left unmolested by the wererats as they want to keep a semblance of order in the town until the normal trade route is reopened. The rats also consider the burgomaster a fool and useless to their plots.

The joke around town is that the burgomaster probably forgot his name, as well as his pants size, birthday, etc. This is essentially true, for the burgomaster was once a very powerful warrior with lands bravely won and deeds heroically performed. But his last mission ended in tragedy when he was *cursed* by the evil object he was sent to destroy. The *curse* affected his memory, causing him to forget his past life and preventing him from remembering many of the small details of daily living. For years, he wandered the countryside as a beggar. When he arrived in Relfren, the kindly townspeople took him in and gave him the figurehead job of burgomaster. Ever since, he's handled the town's meager affairs passably well. In any case, he's a friendly guy and is deceptively strong and skilled when aroused (though this is not well known).

The burgomaster is a good judge of character and trusts the blacksmith (area 13) implicitly. These traits lead him toward helping the PCs when they get in trouble with the law.

His house is a two-story mansion (by Relfren standards) with a few servants to help with his duties. The only interesting aspect of the house is a large balcony which overlooks the town square. It has a high parapet, so that even if the burgomaster forgets to put on his pants before a speech, he's still "covered."

The burgomaster wears a *ring of water walking* but has no idea it is magical. He keeps a *long sword +2*, a set of *plate mail +2*, and a *shield +2* in a locked chest beneath his bed. He doesn't normally wear these, but if the PCs convince him to join them (or he needs to defend himself), he puts these on and surprises everybody (including himself) with his warrior skills.

Burgomaster: AC 7; F10; hp 67; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1 weapon; Dmg by weapon type (+3 for strength); Save F10; ML 8; AL L; S 18, I 9, W 10, D 16, C 16, Ch 14; *ring of water walking*. If a *wish* is used to remove this man's curse, he quickly arranges to leave Relfren and return home to his lands. Alternately, the PCs might be sent to find him at some future date at the request of his friends and relatives at home.

11. General Store. Miss Julee Killian owns the only general store in Relfren. She also sells various crafts and goods made by the townspeople and takes care of their money in a secret vault in the back of her store. The cast-iron vault door is locked with a three-number combination dial (requiring three successful *open locks* rolls by a thief or a *knock* spell). Inside are 10,327 gp, 19,676 sp, and miscellaneous jewelry and other valuables totalling 7,600 gp.

This bright, middle-aged woman is currently being courted by Frederick, the tavern owner (area 5), and they will be engaged within two months (Frederick says six).

The party can buy any normal supplies here for a fair price, except for anything made of silver. Julee explains that since the dwarves' deaths (see area 12), there have been no more silver items made in town and she is currently sold out.

If the PCs ask more questions about that night, Julee whispers that she heard scratching sounds coming from her neighbors' side of the wall. She assumes that these sounds were made by robbers looking for treasure, but they could have been made by the rats that have infested the building recently. Just as she mentions the rats, Julee looks away, grabs a broom, and runs across the shop shouting, "There's one of them right now!" If the disgusting rodent is caught, it turns out to be just a **normal rat** (see "On Wererats" for its statistics).

Julee Killian: AC 8; HD 1; hp 6; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1 short sword; Dmg by weapon type; Save Normal Man; ML 6; AL L; S 10, I 16, W 12, D 14, C 14, Ch 15.

12. Silversmith. Another reward notice is posted on this door, just above a sign saying "No Admittance, by order of the Constable." A dwarven family used to run this little silver shop, but the dwarves were killed two weeks ago by the wererats because silver and magical weapons are the only ones capable of harming lycanthropes in animal form. Now that the dwarves have been eliminated, the wererats feel they will have no difficulty taking over the town, as magical weapons are rare in Relfren.

The dwarves were infected with lycanthropy by the wererats and died of it (see area 21). At first glance, the shop and living quarters look like they've been searched and robbed, but if the PCs check the dwarves' records they find that nothing is missing at all! The blacksmith has been saying this all along and rejoices if the party reaches the same conclusion.

Scattered amid the wreckage are 10 silvered long swords and six silvered daggers that the dwarves were making as costume accessories for the upcoming festival. The wererats were unable to take them, as even the touch of silver causes lycanthropes great pain. The PCs might find these weapons useful if they need to arm themselves or a few civilians should the going get rough. There is also 500 gp worth of silver shavings and goods scattered around the shop.

13. Blacksmith. The only person in town who has a strange accent is the blacksmith, Sven Pent. Sven is of northern barbarian descent (two generations ago) and met and married his wife of 20 years in this very town. They have lived here ever since and have two strong sons. The older son left to explore the world, while the younger has a family of his own in town and expects to take his father's place upon his retirement.

Sven and his family were good friends with the dwarf and his family because of their similar professions and generally similar outlook on life. Sven swings a mean hammer but prefers to wield a two-handed sword when forced into action. He has been trying for some time to get the constable to act on finding those responsible for the dwarves' murders. According to Sven, the constable seems to be hiding something about the recent turn of events in Relfren (not true, really, until very lately; Sven and the constable have never gotten along). If the party discovers any evidence linking the rats and the factory to the murders before actually engaging the wererats in combat, Sven gladly joins them for the rest of the adventure.

Sven and his wife have 4,300 gp saved up in the town bank (the vault of area 11) for their retirement.

Sven Pent: AC 3; F6; hp 60; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1 *two-handed sword +1*; Dmg by weapon type plus strength bonus; Save F6; ML 11; AL L; S 17, I 10, W 14, D 18, C 16, Ch 14; *leather armor +1*.

14. Playground. This large open area near the houses is always filled with playing children during the daytime. A 6'-tall statue of an elephant stands in the middle of the field, and the children have a number of games involving the elephant. No one knows how the statue got there, and few people even know what an elephant is. In fact, the statue was created decades ago by the wizard of the tower (area 16) just to amuse the children.

For several days, the children have been playing with a dog named Fritz, the deceased herbalist's pet. Fritz is lonely and hungry and will befriend anyone who pets him or offers him food. He will not go near any lycanthropes, barking viciously whenever any come within 20', but he won't attack except in self defense.

Fritz (domestic dog): AC 7; HD 2; hp 8; MV 180'(60'); #AT 1 bite; Dmg 1-6; Save F1; ML 6; AL N; CC/13.

If the PCs use a *speak with animals* spell to ask Fritz about the herbalist's death, he cringes backward, his chin on the ground and his tail tucked between his legs. With much coaxing, gentle words, and soft pats, Fritz can be induced to tell the following story:

"We had just finished supperrr, the man and me, and werrre sitting down to a cozy evening by the firrre. All of a sudden some big animals burrrst in and starrrted to tearrr up the place. The man stood up to stop them, but they hit him acrrross the face and he collapsed in his chairrr again. I rrrushed rrright in to defend him, I did. I grrrowled and snapped at the things, and I would have drrriven them off, too, but they werrre carrrying big sticks that they stuck into the firrre grrrate. The sticks caught firrre with a terrrible stink, and I held my grrround until one of the beasts waved a fierrry brrrand in my face. I couldn't help it then, I had to rrrun. I rrraced out thrrrough my little doorrr, barrrking for help, but all I got was a pail of cold waterrr thrrrown on me. I couldn't help him, I rrran away. . . . Oooooh, I'm so ashamed."

Fritz lapses into howls of despair, and nothing more can be coaxed from him.

15. Constable's House. Most people feel very safe having the constable living so near by, safer than they probably should. Since the constable spends much of his time going to and fro and working strange hours, little notice has been taken of his recent activities.

The PCs can search this house, but the only incriminating piece of evidence they can find is a fresh wheel of Emerald Moon cheese hidden beneath the bed (during Day 3 only). The constable keeps what little treasure he has at the general store (area 11). For more on the constable, see area 17.

16. The Wizard's Tower. For decades, this four-story tower has sat alone and undisturbed in the southeast corner of town. At first, the tower was feared, and there were even failed attempts to bring it down. Later, after no harm came from the structure or its occupant, it was ignored, and few people even notice it anymore.

The resident wizard is none other than the founding father of both the cheese factory and the town — Relfren Orfman — still as young and fit as ever. Decades ago, the wizard lived above the cheese factory and conducted his magical research there. One day, he accidentally discovered an anti-aging potion that worked too well. He took one sip and began getting younger and younger each year. Make-up and illusions could do the trick for only so long, and finally he had to stage his own death (of "old age"). He then set out adventuring to find a cure for his malady. The wizard eventually succeeded in halting his age at a permanent 30 years. He then secretly returned to the town he had founded and magically built the tower overnight, in a position to oversee the town and protect it from attack.

Relfren Orfman spent the next few decades trying to duplicate his earlier feats, but to no avail. Recently, however, he has been busy with a new research project, "something for the kiddies." One of his first tricks was to place the stone elephant in the courtyard below (area 14), and he watches the children play for hours (through windows concealed by illusions).

Only the herbalist had seen the wizard in the recent past, and only because the mage needed spell components and news of the outside. Ever since the herbalist died, the wizard hasn't had any news about the town and has been too busy to notice that his people are in trouble. The PCs have no chance to break into the tower through force or magic, but they can enlist the wizard's aid if they talk to the tower long enough to convince him that they are sincere and that the town is in danger.

The party probably needs his help, too. For one of his many experiments, he recently purchased the entire town's meager supply of wolfsbane, which the herbalist fortunately sold to him before his untimely death. Even if the party doesn't need the herb to drive away the lycanthropes, the wizard also made the silver chalice the priest (see areas 18 and 19) is looking for. This is the only magic in town that can cure people who have been infected with lycanthropy, since no cleric in the town or the party is of sufficient level to cure the disease. The wizard has no idea where the chalice is now, as the enchantments he laid upon it prevent even him from locating it magically.

If the PCs succeed in talking to the wizard, he gives them all his remaining wolfsbane and tells them the powers of the chalice (see area 18), after first extracting their promise not to hurt innocent people or damage property (especially the cheese factory). He does not give them his name, and he will accept the death of Grendel once he learns that his relative had become a full lycanthrope.

The DM should feel free to design the interior of this tower to suit his whims, keeping in mind that Relfren has a special love for the unpredictable and unexpected. Otherwise, the DM may feel free to "wing it" with the description, assuming that Relfren makes extensive use of illusions and secret doors to conceal and obscure much of the interior.

The wererats can't get into the tower, and they have no idea how much of a danger the wizard represents. After all, no one's seen the owner in years.

The DM should avoid letting the PCs learn too much about Relfren Orfman or his research (on magical confections and toys). If a PC just happens to guess the link between the wizard and the elephant statue, the mage befriends that person and gives him a short tour of his laboratory (DM's creativity required here).

Relfren Orfman: AC 7; MU 12; hp 39; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1 *dagger +3* or spell; Dmg by weapon type or spell; Save MU12; ML 10; AL L; S 10, I 19, W 15, D 16, C 14, Ch 16; spells: *magic missile* (×3), *sleep, ESP, mirror image, phantasmal force, wizard lock, dispel magic, fly, haste, protection from normal missiles, confusion, ice storm, poly-*

morph self, teleport, wall of stone, and *projected image;* magical items: *staff of power, elven cloak and boots, ring of invisibility.*

17. Constable Station. Constable Camem is the only full-time law enforcement officer in Relfren. Every other able-bodied citizen (men and women over age 18) takes a turn manning the guard station and watching the town at night.

As mentioned earlier, Constable Camem was badly bitten by a wererat when the constable stuck his arm through a partially open door at the Emerald Moon cheese factory some time ago. He becomes a greater wererat shortly after the PCs arrive in town. Until he becomes a wererat, Camem believes that the silversmith dwarves were killed during a robbery (by strangers like the PCs) and that the herbalist died of carelessness. Though he knows better as a wererat, the PCs have no luck in convincing him of anything to the contrary — and in fact put themselves at risk by telling him anything at all.

The station itself consists of one large office and four 15′ × 15′ jail cells dug into the stone mountainside. The cells are cold and damp, but they are not magically protected in any way, so typical strength rolls, spells (providing the spell components are available), and lock-picking skills can open them. Usually, one adult villager guard (see statistics at area 2) is on duty here at all times.

Constable Bert Camem (before becoming a greater wererat): AC −1; F7; hp 70; MV 90′(30′); #AT 1 *long sword +1;* Dmg by weapon type; Save F7; ML 9; AL L; S 16, I 10, W 10, D 17, C 17, Ch 11; *chain mail +1, shield +2;* SD takes half damage from normal weapons due to infection with lycanthropy.

Constable Bert Camem (after becoming a greater wererat): AC 5 (5 in rat form); F7; hp 70; MV 120′(40′); #AT 1 *long sword +1* (1 bite in rat form); Dmg by weapon type (1-4 hp in rat form); Save F7; ML 9; AL C; S 16, I 10, W 10, D 17, Ch 11; *shield +2* (used only in human form).

Constable Camem's charisma largely comes from his office, as he is not especially easy to get along with. In terms of personality, he may charitably be described as dull, though he is not a stupid person. He is merely boring and unremarkable — even after he becomes a greater wererat.

18. Shepherd's Stockyard and Valley. The southwestern corner of town is walled off with a 10′-high wooden fence. Only one large door appears throughout its length, with a much smaller door cut into it. Behind the wall lives the town's entire animal population (except horses and pets). Cows, chickens, pigs, and sheep are all raised by one man, known to the townspeople only as Animal Man.

This poor man is human but very, very ugly. Because of this, he hides like a leper behind the fence and takes care of the only creatures he feels won't shun him. Actually, although the good people of Relfren probably wouldn't invite him to dinner every night, some of them would befriend him if he just gave them the chance. Most people allow him to mind his own business as long as he doesn't bother anyone. The only person in town who has seen Animal Man regularly is the priest, Father Thero (area 19). When orders for milk failed to come through one week, the priest managed to convince Animal Man that he needed help and was allowed in long enough to set and heal the herder's recently broken leg. Father Thero had been slowly getting the misguided shepherd to come out of his shell.

There are a number of rumors going around about Animal Man. "He's half-man, half-beast" is one story. "Anyone who looks at him will go crazy" has long been popular as well. Actually, the shepherd is just a sad, ugly little man. The possibly disappointed party members will have their fair share of true man-beasts before the adventure is over.

Animal Man takes money for his animals and milk through a small hole in the large door, then leaves the sold goods in a small room behind the large door while he sneaks off to safety. When he pulls a string, the large door unlocks and the buyer enters and takes his purchase. A sign in the small room reads "Close the door behind you!" It will be rather easy for the party to sneak in this way, since Animal Man rarely checks to see if the area is clear. Empty metal milk jugs are returned by throwing them over the fence (the animals inside have learned to graze elsewhere).

The PCs can also climb the fence quite easily. Once inside, they see a huge, well-kept courtyard which includes a large chicken coop separated from a pig pen. A pass in the mountainside leads off into the distance. If they follow the pass, the PCs eventually come to a grassy valley where the larger animals graze. A natural spring feeds the valley and allows Animal Man to wash himself, his animals, and any returned milk jugs. Animal Man always sleeps near his animals, making sure they are warm and well.

Beneath the floor of the chicken coop is Animal Man's treasure — a deep pit filled with 803 gp and a silver chalice. He saved up all these coins over the years, living off his own animals and the other few necessities Father Thero was kind enough to bring him until recently.

If the PCs manage to befriend Animal Man (perhaps by telling him of the strange problems Father Thero is having), he offers them his magical chalice and informs them of its properties. The silver chalice was made by the wizard Relfren Orfman (area 16) to help the town in case of plague or other diseases. It was lost by a well-meaning citizen, and the young children picked it up. After battering it around for a while, they accidentally threw it over the fence into the stockyard and were afraid to recover it. Animal Man took the chalice as payment for his many services, since he keeps no ledger of his business dealings.

One day several months later, one of Animal Man's pigs was ill and he wanted to bring it some water. Unfortunately, his water pail had a hole in it, and Father Thero had taken it away to be repaired. Always wanting the best for his charges, Animal Man used the silver chalice to bring water to his stricken friend. Remarkably, the pig recovered almost immediately after it drank from the chalice. Ever since that day, Animal Man has used the chalice to help care for his animals when the weather turns cold or the flu goes around.

The chalice will cure any one disease for one creature once each day. It will even cure those infected with lycanthropy who have been werecreatures for a long time. If the party members can catch those infected in the town, hold them long enough to get them to drink from the chalice, and keep them from becoming reinfected, the town's problems can be cured eventually.

Animal Man's only other companion is Gunter, a grumpy goat. Gunter chases anyone who enters the compound (except for Animal Man) but won't usually harm people. He just makes enough noise to alert Animal Man to intruders.

If any lycanthropy-infected being (including Father Thero) accompanies the party within the compound, Gunter chases that person even after Animal Man arrives. Animal Man quickly grabs the goat and apologizes, noting that the goat normally doesn't behave so badly. Smart PCs can use Gunter or the dog Fritz (area 14) to point out infected townspeople when the nature of the plot is revealed.

Animal Man: AC 8; HD 1; hp 4; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1 dagger; Dmg by weapon type; Save Normal Man; ML 6; AL N; S 16; I 10; W 10; D 14; C 10; Ch 5.

Gunter, the goat: AC 7; HD 2; hp 10; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1 butt; Dmg 1-4; Save F1; ML 12; AL N; ER/46.

19. Father Thero's Quarters. Father Thero of the town's churchgoing congregation is in very great trouble. The wererats decided to infect him so he wouldn't cure diseased parishioners during the lycanthropes' intended takeover, but the wererats didn't know that Father Thero was not of high enough level to remove lycanthropy anyway. It was made to appear that he had been attacked by a bear, and he believes he has had a lucky escape.

The good father has always been very lawful and helpful, and he is now having great difficulty changing to the Chaotic alignment lycanthropy breeds. He has had terrible nightmares about huge rats and blood, which he believes are torments sent by the forces of evil and Chaos. He has spent the last week repenting his sins (all minimal) and begging for help from the Immortals. He has not yet become a full lycanthrope, though he will become one at midnight on day 3. At night, Father Thero behaves oddly, walking the grounds of the church (area 20) and feeling very irritable because of the progress of the disease and the presence of an almost-full moon (see "Midnight, Day 3").

If the PCs manage to convince the priest that he is suffering from a disease rather than the temptations of Chaos, the good father believes that the PCs came in answer to his prayers and offers to help them. Father Thero despairs of ever finding a lost silver chalice which is rumored to cure all diseases, no matter how far progressed (see areas 16 and 18). The father tells the party that he believes the chalice might be still within the town, but he has no idea where it might be.

The PCs can count on curative spells and sanctuary from Father Thero should they require anything. The party cannot convince Father Thero to let them into the graveyard (area 21), so they must enter there on their own talents. The good father has no treasure, as he always gave donations to the needy or used them for repairs to the church.

Father Thero: AC 9; C5; hp 30; MV 120'(40'); #AT nil (refuses to use weapons); Dmg nil; Save C5; ML 5; AL L; S 15, I 13, W 17, D 9, C 12, Ch 18; four potions of *healing;* takes half damage from normal weapons due to infection with lycanthropy; spells: *cure light wounds* (×2), *bless* (×2).

20. The Church. Father Thero has been neglecting his duties recently, as this dusty little building indicates. Fortunately for the party, Father Thero spends all of his time during the day at home (area 19), so he will not see any intrusion into the graveyard by the party during these hours. Unfortunately, Father Thero patrols the church at night and angrily chases off any intruders, throwing rocks that always miss. There is no treasure in the church.

21. Graveyard. Space is always a concern in a mountain village, and Relfren is no exception. Years ago, when the town was first founded, the natural caves here were converted into catacombs. Recently, the graveyard has been busier than ever with the deaths of the herbalist and the dwarves.

The gate entrance to the yard outside the church is the only way in and is locked by a simple padlock (Father Thero has the only key). Intrepid PCs can climb over the gate or pick the lock easily. Within the caves are the remains of the town's dead, which are well preserved by the cave's dry air.

The branch marked with an X on the map contains the aforementioned bodies covered in white linen. The three dwarves slain two weeks ago (father,

mother, and child) are in fair condition; examination reveals only a few small bites on each of them, not enough to have caused their deaths. The constable, without adequate facilities, assumed that they had been poisoned by professional thieves who quickly fled the town. Since lycanthropy kills demihumans, it was only necessary for the wererats to bite each of the dwarves enough times to infect them, then hold them still until the disease ran its course.

The herbalist, on the other hand, was murdered with a few dagger swings. Any PC cleric who examines his charred remains can determine that a few of the wounds were not inflicted by falling debris, and that the herbalist died before the fire was set. While the official cause of death is labelled as smoke inhalation, the lungs of the herbalist are free of smoke.

If party members use a *speak with the dead* spell, the victims describe their ratlike attackers, proving that these deaths were indeed murders.

These clues should prove useful in a trial if the criminals are apprehended (rather than slain) and tried by someone other than the constable (who becomes a wererat himself during the evening on day 2). There is no treasure in the graveyard.

22. The Silver Crescent Inn. Two newlywed elves, Qil and Tesal Goldbough, recently opened the only new business in town, a beautiful inn and tavern. This is one of the few buildings in town built up on stilts and into the mountainside. Many houses like this line the passes to the east and west of Relfren, and the PCs may see several of them as they enter or leave Relfren. Being the only elves in town, the Goldboughs feel out of place but are trying to make friends as best they can.

Their goods are of the finest quality, but their prices are a little high. They built their little chalet in order to attract the upper-scale merchant trade that has now begun to flow regularly through the town. Because of the poor quality of the other inn in town (area 1), business has generally been very good, although no one is staying here when the party arrives. The Goldboughs know nothing about the recent crimes in town, as they have been too busy putting the finishing touches on some new decorations.

The party might end up staying here at the time when the wererats plan on attacking (see "Evening, Day 1"). If so, the PCs each take damage (as noted under the events for Midnight, Day 1) and are still arrested for the crime, even though this is a patently absurd assertion by the now-wererat Constable Camem.

Qil Goldbough: AC 7; E1; hp 6; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1 short sword; Dmg by weapon type; Save E1; ML 6; AL N; S 14, I 12, W 11, D 17, C 12, Ch 16; spell: *magic missile.*

Tesal Goldbough: AC 7; E1; hp 6; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1 short sword; Dmg by weapon type; Save E1; ML 6; AL N; S 12, I 13, W 12, D 17, C 12, Ch 17; spell: *sleep.*

23. Stables. The PCs must stable their horses here under the shabby care of Smythely Jonk, a rather disreputable man whom the town would rather see gone. Smythely is obnoxious but not criminal, and he wants only to be left alone. His horses sense lycanthropes within the stables and have been the only things keeping him safe from the wererats.

Once a month, Smythely's cousin comes through and takes his treasure to a bank to the east, so Smythely has no great amount of money stored away in town (something that makes the townspeople even more suspicious). Smythely is one of the best customers at Meltle's Tavern (area 5).

Smythely Jonk: AC 9; HD 1; hp 6; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1 long sword; Dmg by weapon type; Save Normal Man; ML 6; AL N; S 16, I 10, W 11, D 14, C 12, Ch 7.

Concluding the Adventure

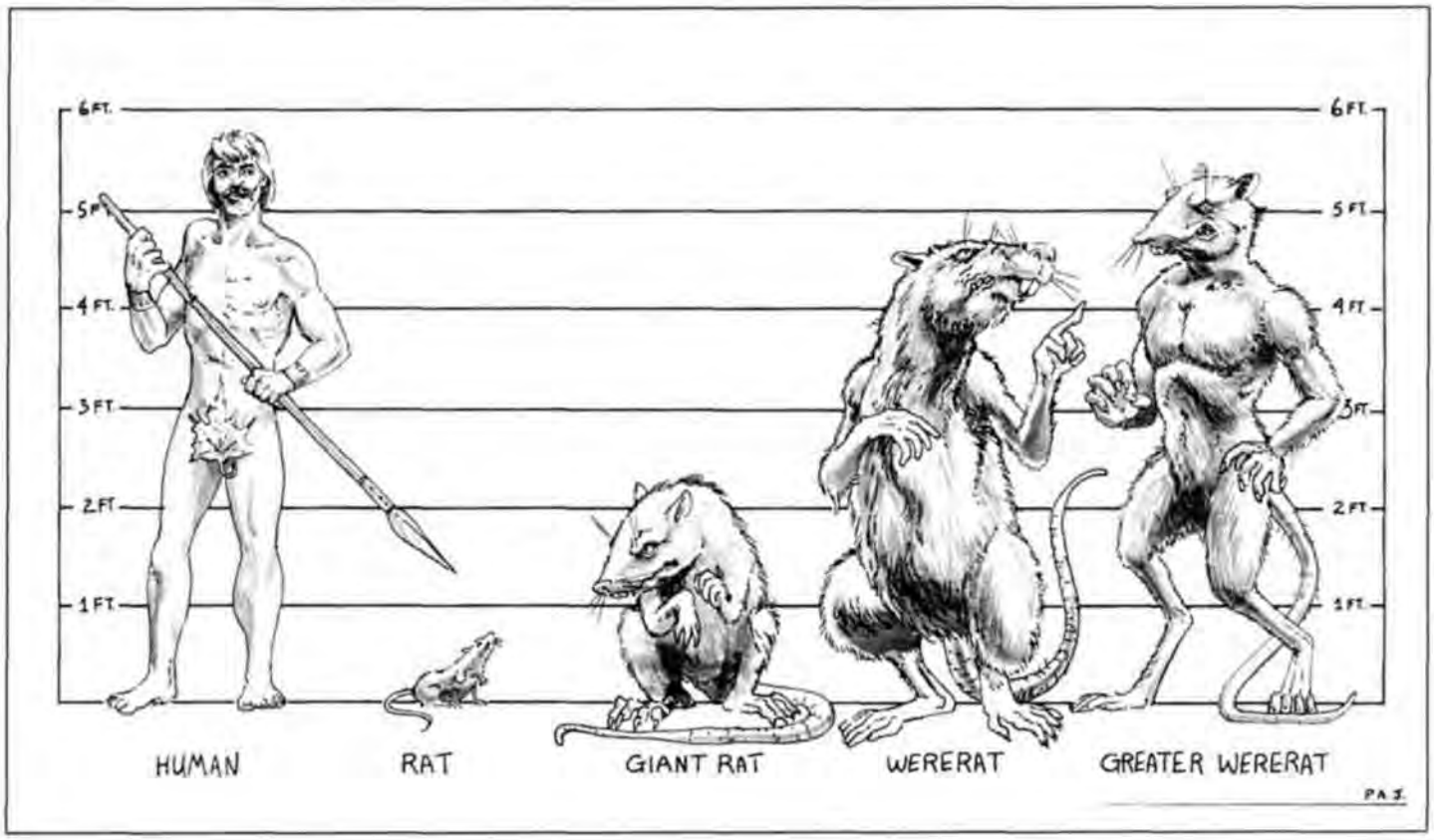
If the PCs succeed in eliminating the threat to Relfren with a minimum of lives lost and all the criminals in custody, the townspeople offer them an award of only 1,000 gp each (no more can be spared). In addition, the blacksmith turns over the 1,000-gp reward originally offered for finding the dwarves' murderers. All crimes committed by the PCs are pardoned unless the acts were unusually serious (the DM should base his judgment on the alignments and actions of the party members).

The PCs are also offered the deed to the cheese factory, and they may decide to sell it or run it themselves. No one in town makes an immediate offer for the factory, but the next day a traveling merchant offers 20,000 gp for the whole thing (he can be bargained a little higher if the group is charismatic). This merchant is actually the wizard Relfren in disguise. He could, of course, claim the factory outright, but he prefers to remain incognito and pay the PCs a truly fitting reward for their deeds. If he purchases the factory, the wizard arranges a secret partnership with young Karen Qwen (area 7), and they expand the business into a full-line confectionery, with jams, candy-drops, licorice, the works. They continue to make cheese and baked goods, as well as some special toys Relfren works on in his spare time. The townspeople end up with extra work, for which Relfren pays handsomely. This new prosperity draws in new businesses and new citizens as well, transforming Relfren within months. The wizard maintains his tower and eventually leaves the entire business to Karen when he returns to his spell research.

If the party flees from the lycanthropes instead of helping defeat them, the infected population grows and grows as more people spend the night and end up staying permanently. The lycanthrope menace will eventually turn the town into a wererat metropolis, a base of operations for a full wererat thieves' guild. Of course, the party may then have to deal with this menace on the way back through the mountain pass.

Then, too, the PCs might drive most of the wererats and greater wererats out, using wolfsbane and force, only partially succeeding in their task of saving the town. Rewards should be adjusted according to the odds they faced and how much of their mission was completed. As long as there is one wererat left in Relfren, there will soon be more.

Finally, the mountain pass that was blocked by bandits will be cleared in 2-5 months by an army of imperial knights. If Relfren has become safe and prosperous, some caravans will continue to head through it in preference to the other pass. If Relfren has been taken over by wererats, word will leak out and a major force of imperial knights, backed by high-level magic-users and clerics, will arrive within another 2-5 months. The town's pass will be closed for months during the fighting, and its future afterward will be uncertain indeed.



On Wererats

According to the D&D Basic Set *Dungeon Masters Rulebook,* wererats are not like other lycanthropes. All other lycanthropes are human beings who can change into animal form, but wererats are giant-sized rats that can take on human form. This is only half of the story.

Usually, wererats are loosely organized sewer-dwellers that tend to dominate lesser groups of giant and normal rats, using them for food when nothing else is available. In this environment, only giant rats that escape being eaten can be infected with lycanthropy, as normal rats never have enough hit points to survive the infecting bite in the first place. Giant rats grow even larger once they've contracted the disease and become wererats themselves. The constant struggles for food and control as the wererats battle each other usually keep the wererat population under control; weak, aged, and stupid wererats are crowded out and eventually starve. Because of the unique habitats preferred by these peculiar lycanthropes, biting giant rats is usually the only way of passing on this dread disease. However, wererats sometimes encounter human beings or demi-humans — most often adventurers looking for underground treasure or a way into a castle or town on the surface.

When demi-humans are infected with lycanthropy (losing 50% or more of their hit points from wererat bite damage), they sicken and die relatively quickly. Infected demi-humans will survive for one hour per point of Constitution (which allows them time to try to halt the progress of the disease). This gives PC parties a serious time limit should someone get bitten early in a fray. Infected demi-humans immediately feel weak, as if they had been poisoned (gaining a −2 on all rolls to hit and on saving throws), and feel a burning fever race through them. All demi-human clans teach about these phenomena, and demi-human PCs should each get an Intelligence check to realize that they've been infected with lycanthropy.

Humans who encounter these creatures rarely live to tell about it, as wererats are a Chaotic lot who enjoy human flesh immensely. In the extremely rare instance in which a human being survives a wererat attack and is infected, a special lycanthrope is produced (providing, of course, that the unfortunate person is unable to obtain the curative assistance of an 11th- or higher-level cleric). Sages refer to these creatures as "greater" wererats because they retain their classes and abilities when in human form, but can change into man-sized rats if they so desire. Greater wererats have the game statistics of normal wererats, except that the original hit points and mentality of the affected characters are retained in lycanthrope form.

There are both benefits and drawbacks to becoming a greater wererat. The subject becomes immune to normal weapons, like any lycanthrope, when in either human or giant-rat form. However, no matter what the character's original alignment, the newly made greater wererat will eventually turn Chaotic. For PCs and NPCs, a Wisdom check is made once each week before shifting one alignment position (i.e., Lawful to Neutral, Neutral to Chaotic). If the PC is strongly devoted to an alignment (e.g., a Neutral druid or a highly Lawful cleric), add +2 to the

check. Still, when the transformation to being a wererat is done, the PC becomes Chaotic immediately, no matter what alignment was held beforehand. Father Thero, in this adventure, will retain his Lawful alignment until midnight on day 3, when he becomes a full lycanthrope and turns wholly Chaotic. PCs who become lycanthropes become NPCs under the DM's control, as per the *Dungeon Masters Rulebook,* page 33.

Greater wererats do not usually infect other beings or creatures with lycanthropy, since they prefer to remain in their more powerful human form and only resort to rat form as a means of escape or for deceit. For reasons that are not yet understood, lycanthropy can only be passed through the animal set of teeth by any lycanthrope. In the extremely rare event that a lycanthrope decides to deliberately spread its disease (as occurs in this adventure), the results can be devastating.

It is also an extremely rare event for a greater wererat to become established as the leader of his own group of normal wererats. Normal wererats are usually difficult to control and, being Chaotic, difficult to trust. But some small thieving bands have been known to ravage the countryside for a time before they were eventually thrown down by the local populace or by an anonymous group of adventurers.

Many learned sages have wondered why lycanthropes have never infected the entire world with their dreaded disease. The immunity lycanthropes have to normal weaponry makes them almost unstoppable under most circumstances, but their Chaotic nature and inherent inability to organize themselves have kept them fighting each other instead of banding together.

In any case, the existence of the greater wererat has only recently been discovered, even though the phenomena must have been occurring for centuries, so it is wise to say that not everything about lycanthropy has yet been divined. The events chronicled recently in the little town of Relfren only show the general populace how little the sages really know.

For convenience, statistics for normal rats, giant rats, normal wererats, and greater wererats are given here:

Normal rat: AC 9; HD less than 1 (1 hp each); MV 60'(20')/30'(10'); #AT 1 bite per pack of 5-10 (or per pack of 10 if more than 10 are present); Dmg 1-6 plus disease; Save Normal Man; ML 5 (but flee from fire unless driven by magic or wererats); AL L; BD/36.

Giant rat: AC 7; HD ½ (1-4 hp each); MV 120'(40')/60'(20'); #AT 1 bite; Dmg 1-3 plus disease; Save Normal Man; ML 8 (but flee from fire unless driven by magic or wererats); AL C; BD/36.

Normal wererat: AC 7 (9 in human form); HD 3*; MV 120'(40')/30'(10') (use former movement rate in human form); #AT 1 bite (1 weapon in human form); Dmg 1-4 (by weapon type in human form); Save F3; ML 8; AL C; BD/33.

Greater wererat: AC 9 (7 in rat form); HD and hp as per previous class and level*; MV 120'(40') (as per normal wererat in rat form, with swimming abilities); #AT 1 weapon (1 bite in rat form); Dmg by weapon type (1-4 in rat form); Save as per class and level; ML 8+; AL C.

There is a 5% chance of contracting a disease from the bite of a normal or giant rat. This disease may be avoided by a Saving Throw vs. Poison; if this roll is failed, the victim has a 25% chance of dying in 1-6 days, otherwise falling ill and being unable to go adventuring for one month.

Wererats and greater wererats can summon and control 1-2 rats or giant rats each, with summoned creatures arriving in 1-4 rounds to obey all commands. A lycanthrope struck by wolfsbane in combat must make a Saving Throw vs. Poison or else flee in fear. In animal form, wererats and greater wererats can only be harmed by magical or silvered weapons or else by magical spells. The very touch of silver causes lycanthropes intense pain. In human form, wererats have slightly elongated faces and pronounced noses, though this is rarely seen as exceptional.

The normal wererats in this adventure prefer to remain in their giant rat form unless it is necessary to seize an item or escape in human form. The greater wererats prefer their human form at all times, unless their giant rat forms would be more helpful. At midnight on the third day, all wererats and greater wererats will be in their rat forms, to spread their lycanthropy as widely as possible among the townspeople.

Though both wererats and greater wererats can use normal tools and weapons in their human forms, neither will wear armor, as it hampers their abilities to change shape. Ω

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(continued from page 34)
silk packet of *dust of disappearance, amulet of proof against detection and location.*

35. Gerald Moonfellow's Room.

> The door to this room is *wizard locked.* The room beyond is painted in various shades of blue and is devoid of all furnishings except for a bed and a single chair.

Except for the change of clothing hanging behind the bedroom door, the magic-user travels with no luggage, nor does he like to have his room cluttered. There is little of interest to the adventurers here except that on the chair by the bed is a small vial labeled "For Indigestion." If the jewel theft has not yet taken place, it contains the same sort of digestion-slowing liquid possessed by Primperson (see area 34). Otherwise, the vial is empty.

See area 11 for Gerald Moonfellow's statistics.

36. Linen Closet.

> This room is lined with shelves on which can be seen various folded garments, sheets, pillow cases, towels, and the like. A window looks south onto the island.

If the PCs are exploring this area for the first time fairly early in the adventure, the linen closet is empty but for those items mentioned above. Should they explore it again later, there is a 50% chance they encounter the doppleganger Grunthein sitting under a pile of clothes eating a chicken leg liberated from the kitchen. The chance of surprising him is the same as usual (see area 3), but he will try to imitate one of the adventurers to cause confusion while he attempts to escape. If hostilities are inevitable, Grunthein surrenders rather than cause a fuss, but he will fight to preserve his own life if the need arises.

Grunthein denies all knowledge of any jewel theft. He can tell the PCs any items of information you feel he could have found out from sneaking around and using his *ESP* occasionally (but not often). He knows, for example, that Peter Curlflower has been moving about the house at odd hours of the night. Grunthein has seen him going into the east corridor north of area 37, locking the door behind him, and returning up to an hour later.

37. Corridor to East Wing.

> The door leading north from this area into the east wing has a large, newly fitted mortice lock. A sign tacked onto the door says, "No Admittance — Wing Under Repair."

The PCs may attempt to pick the lock at no penalty. Peter Curlflower is the only person with a key to the door.

38. The Prison of Hadrian Bassman. This is where Curlflower and Whitefriar have imprisoned the musician who recognized Ruga as the peasant he actually is. Hadrian Bassman lies bound and gagged on a narrow cot. If released, Bassman tells the PCs the entire story, as Curlflower at mealtimes told Bassman everything, feeling he owed him the full tale at least.

Thinking that Ruga was trying a con job on the upper-class guests, Bassman, who had traveled through Ruga's village and heard the story of his disappearance, voiced his suspicions to Peter Curlflower, the representative of his employer with whom he had the most contact. The next thing he knew, he was bundled into this room by Whitefriar and Curlflower, and the story was put out that Bassman had been imprisoned for stealing. Since then, the musician has lain here, although Curlflower has made sure he was warm and fed (though he could do with a good wash).

The guests have been told that Bassman will stand trial after being returned to the mainland on the next ship. In truth, once the experiment is concluded, Whitefriar plans to release the musician after offering him a healthy bribe to forget his unlawful imprisonment.

What the PCs do with Bassman's information is entirely up to them. If they make a public announcement to the other guests, the odds are that everyone will think Ruga is the thief, as he is a member of the lower class. Bassman, of course, has no idea who the thief really is or what happened to the necklace.

Hadrian Bassman: AC 10; MV 12"; zero-level human; hp 4; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); AL NG.

Concluding the Adventure

Obviously, the adventure's progress will rest on your ability to keep things moving. Be sure the NPCs catch the attention of the PCs and keep things from getting dull. The use of spells and magical items by the PCs may prove to shorten the adventure greatly, but Abbess Gwinervan is there to help the adventurers out by dropping clues as necessary. Use her, but remember that others who might be prowling about after dark may hear or see things to help or hinder the investigation.

On the day the ship is to arrive and take everyone home, the servants and guests pack their belongings, shut down the mansion, and gather in area 3 to await sighting of the ship by the doormen. As the group heads for the harbor, Whitefriar reveals the details of his bet with Brigholsom (unless it has already been revealed), and all learn that Ruga is no baron at all. Whitefriar lives up to his promise to pay Ruga for his part in the deception.

Bassman, the musician kept prisoner in the mansion, is released after the deception is revealed. He seems to be willing to forget about his ordeal, but in truth he plans to take revenge on Whitefriar and Curlflower at some future date.

You should invent the statistics of the ship picking up the group as appropriate. The PCs may find themselves back on the island someday by choice (if they decide to visit or loot the mansion on their own) or chance (if they are hired by Whitefriar for further work — perhaps if some undesirable sea life or pirates have taken over the mansion). Ω

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